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WAR

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2001 A SPACE ODYSSEY
ARTHUR C. CLARKE

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Introduced by
Michael Moorcock
Illustrations by
Joe Wilson
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GET EXCITED ABOUT PETE'S DRAGON

It's another remake, but we have a good feeling about this one. Maybe it's because of the cast, featuring the likes of Bryce Dallas Howard, Robert Redford and Karl Urban. Maybe it's the presence of director David Lowery, previously responsible for the not-half-bad *Ain't Them Bodies Saints*. Or perhaps it is because it makes us recall our own childhoods again, harping back to the sense of wonder we all once felt. Doubtless this will be a different entity from Disney's 1977 classic, but we're still excited.



Superheroes fighting superheroes. To some, it's the sign of a medium finally eating itself. To others, it's the exciting culmination of the age-old debate: who would win in a fight?

True, DC has got there first, although *Captain America: Civil War* is a different proposition entirely. In the DC Cinematic Universe, Batman and Superman are suspicious unknowns to each other. Here, Steve Rogers and Tony Stark's friendship has already been established, and its dismantling promises repercussions for not only them, but the entire Marvel Cinematic Universe. Make no mistake: this is a pretty-bloody-big deal.

Yet their scrap is just the latest in a series of superhero movie trends: after the big punch-up, next will be the galaxy-spanning crossovers of *Justice League* and *Avengers: Infinity War*. After that, who the hell knows?

In the meantime, we'll stick to the present – and what a glorious time it is. In addition to our behind-the-scenes look at Marvel's punchiest movie to date, we speak to the cast of *Game Of Thrones* about what's ahead on the blank canvas that is Season Six, go one-on-one with horror icon and all-round legend John Carpenter, and get the lowdown on *Outcast*, the latest Robert Kirkman comic-book adaptation.

Whose side are you on? Whatever the answer, enjoy the issue!

Steve

Steve Wright
Deputy Editor

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MARK MILLAR WEIGHS IN ON THE ULTIMATE FIGHT



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MEET THE TEAM

Q. What should be the *Civil War* post-credits scene?



James Hoare
Editor in Chief

A. Spidey leaves
The final shot is him walking back to Sony along a busy highway.



Steve Wright
Deputy Editor

A. Agents Of SHIELD
Coulson, Daisy et al turn up late. "Did we miss anything guys?"



Jonathan Hatfull
Features Editor

A. Joss Whedon
Recuperating in that alpine resort from the movie *Youth*.



Poppy-Jay Palmer
Senior Staff Writer

A. Superhero love
Thor and Hulk bonding in an Asgardian sauna listening to Barry White.



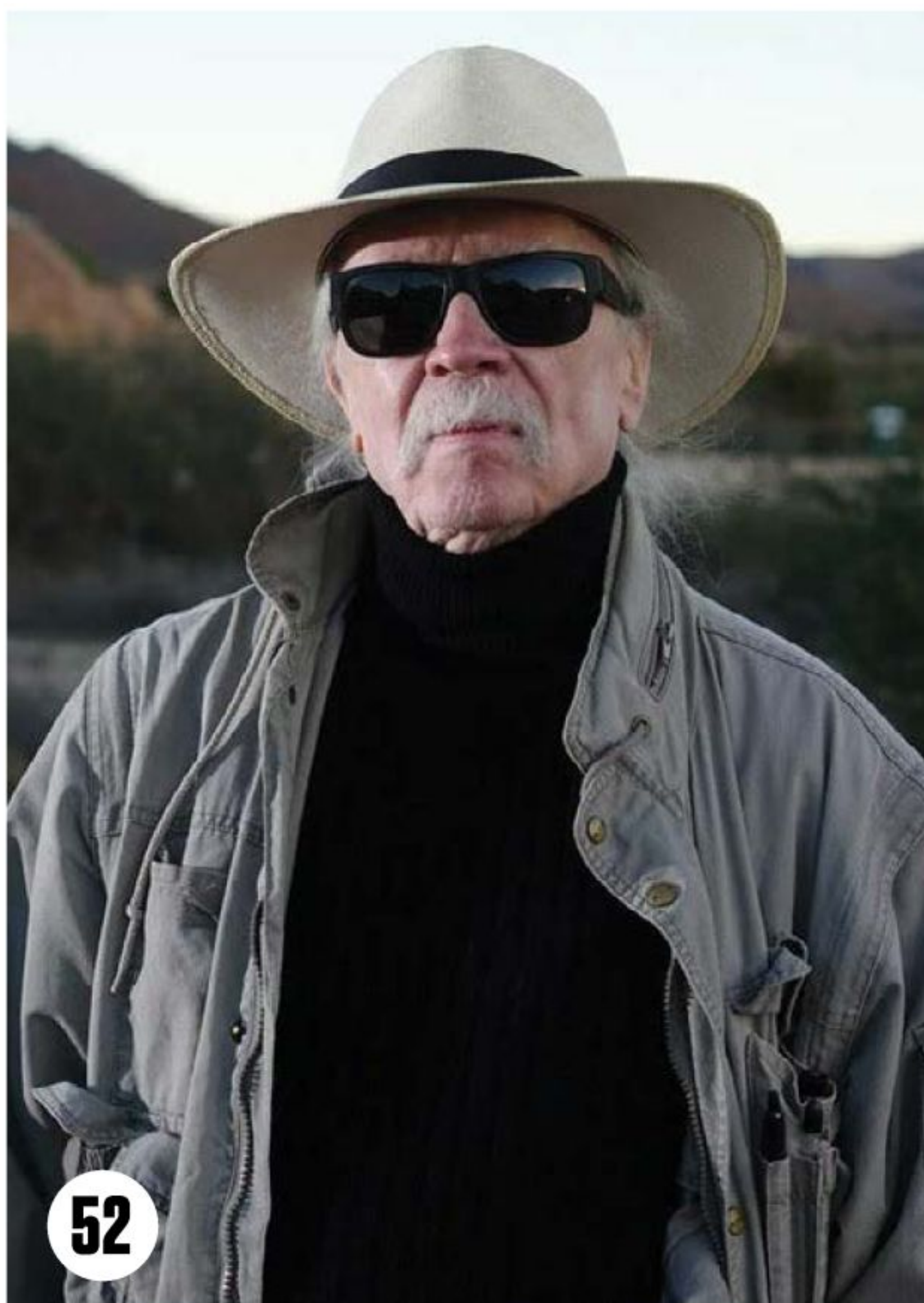
Marcus Faint
Art Editor

A. Illuminati Meeting
Dr Strange, Black Bolt et al plotting how to send Hulk into space.



Jen Neal
Production Editor

A. Sad Spider-Man
Andrew Garfield in his Spidey suit crying into his cereal.



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PORTAL

Your essential, trustworthy and unrivalled guide to the latest genre happenings

11.22.63 "IS TRUE TO THE BOOK"

We get the lowdown on the Stephen King adaptation we've all been waiting for... WORDS POPPY-JAY PALMER

It has finally happened. Someone has made a TV adaptation of Stephen King's brilliant alternate history/time travel novel *11/22/63*, and it actually looks pretty darn good. Writer, creator and showrunner Bridget Carpenter (*Dead Like Me*) has brought the story to life in an eight-part miniseries called *11.22.63* (with dots instead of forward slashes for some reason), which is set to make its UK premiere on Fox this April.

For a sneak preview of the series, we spoke to *How I Live Now* and *Pride* actor George MacKay, who plays the

free-spirited Bill Turcotte. But this Bill is quite unlike the one fans of the book are familiar with. He's been aged down a fair bit, and been given a lot more to do. Now, he almost acts as an outlet for protagonist Jake Epping's internal monologue.

"Bill is a sort of cut-and-run in a very rough, small town in Kentucky," MacKay tells us. "He hasn't really got much to live for really. He's existing in this very small town, and he's kind of hit a bit of a dead end. He's a bit suspended. But because of that he's an opportunist. He's grown up a bit of a hustler and a wily survivor. Basically, Jake comes along, and I can't

James Franco and Sarah Gadon as Jake Epping and Sadie Dunhill.



008 ROGUE ONE



Everything we know about the upcoming Star Wars prequel

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Kim Dickens gives the first word on Season Two of the Walking Dead spinoff

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We break down the new spectre-smashing trailer

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Wall-crawlers of the multiverse unite in the animated series

say much of the context in which we meet, but from then on he joins Jake.

“What was fun about playing him was on the surface there were lots of differences in terms of his accent and things like that compared to what I’ve played before, but because he’s had such a tough life he has this lovely opportunism to him. He takes every chance he gets because he doesn’t really get a break very often. Therefore there’s a lot of comedy to play with in that. [In the series] he’s somewhat of a writing device... in the book there’s so much of an internal monologue for Jake as he goes through his head, but you can’t really do that on screen or you end up with an endless voiceover. So Bill is there to ask the questions that Jake needs to ask of himself and also the audience needs to ask of Jake.”

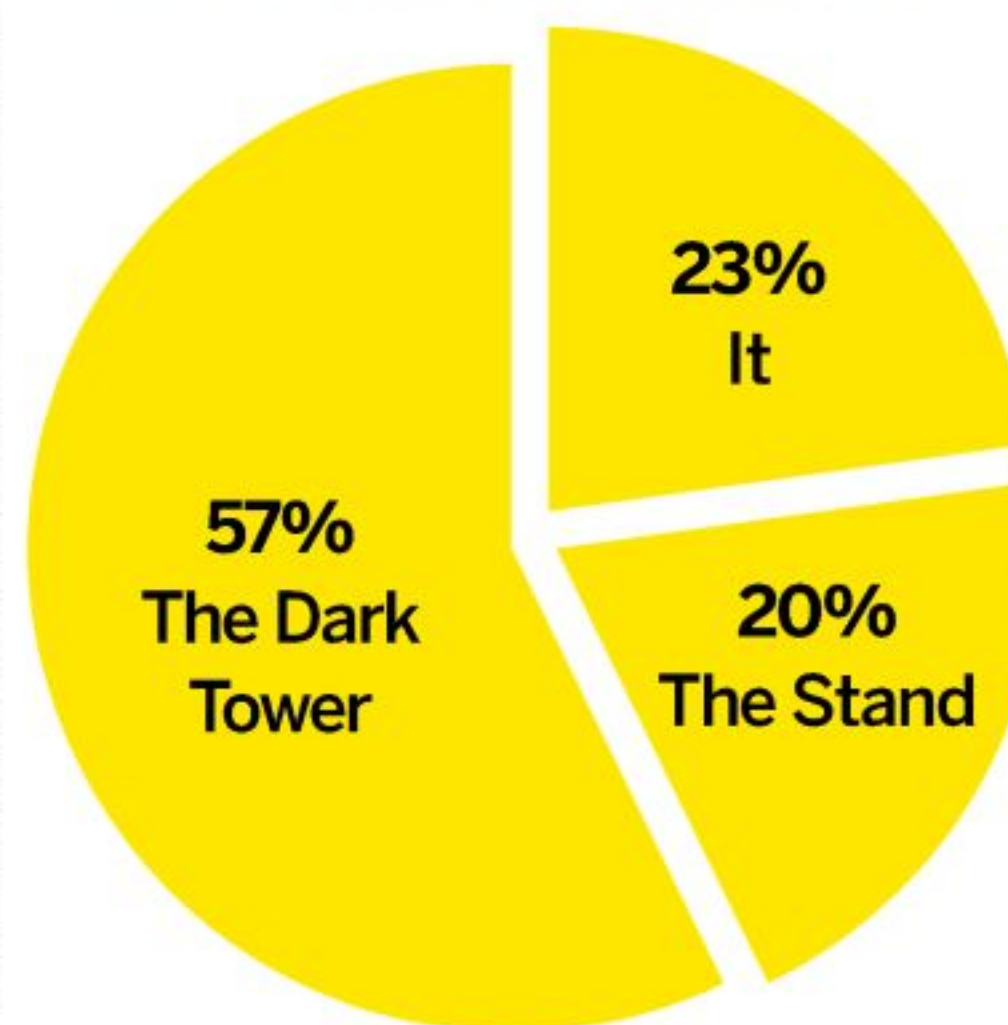
Despite this big change, MacKay reckons fans of the novel are going to be very happy with *11.22.63*. “Apart from Bill, it’s very true to the book. I think the main thing is, from reading it, the menace that’s within the world that Stephen King creates and the kind of sultry nature of the past, it’s so appealing and amazing

in many ways, but there’s a real danger to it all. I think that’s something that Bridget managed to get across in this interpretation of it. It keeps it really exciting to watch. I just love the way that the past pushes back, and that was one of my favourite creations within the book: the past is a character in itself. That is very much a part of the series too.”

In order to get into the role, MacKay certainly did his research. But it wasn’t just JFK biography after JFK biography. He wanted to get a real feel for the past. “I tried to just get a sort of sense politically and culturally of where America was at, and then also Kentucky as well. One of the things that I learnt as I was doing is was the difference in terms of state to state, the scale of America and the cultural shifts across the country. We’ve got a miniature version of that. People talk about the North-South divide, the contrast between the north and south of England. I mean, England would sit within Texas... I just tried to research it as much as I could through books, and through music to be honest, as well. That’s really interesting.

“THE MENACE THAT’S IN THE WORLD STEPHEN KING CREATES, IT’S AMAZING IN MANY WAYS, BUT THERE’S A REAL DANGER TO IT”
GEORGE MACKAY

WHICH STEPHEN KING MOVIE CURRENTLY IN DEVELOPMENT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED TO SEE?



“The bluegrass music is such a big part of the culture in Kentucky. I think the tropes associated with modern country are a bit more stereotyped now. There’s a really interesting documentary called *The High Lonesome Sound*, which is about the mountain men communities. Also, because the town Bill is from is fictional it allows you to pick and choose. You know, he could have come from the mountains, he could have had this, he could have had that... you pick the bits you like about Kentucky’s culture.”

As with the book, the series follows the adventures of Jake Epping, an unsuspecting teacher who gets talked into going back in time to the early Sixties and attempt to stop JFK getting assassinated. James Franco headlines the series as Epping, and MacKay couldn’t be happier to have worked with him: “It was wonderful! He’s an inspiring man to be around in terms of how to be productive,” says MacKay. “He’s doing so much all of the time. He’s constantly stimulating himself, and that was really amazing to see. He’s always working.”

11.22.63 will air on Fox from 10 April.



Epping is an unsuspecting teacher who gets talked into going back in time.



George MacKay as Bill Turcotte, Epping’s ‘internal monologue’.



Al Templeton (Chris Cooper) discovers the fateful time portal.

6 THINGS WE KNOW ABOUT ROGUE ONE

Breaking down *Star Wars'* first anthology film

WORDS POPPY-JAY PALMER



1 Darth Vader might let loose

It's set after the prequels, but before the original trilogy, so Darth Vader may come into the story in some way. According to *Inquisitr*, "fans will apparently get a chance to see the Sith Lord like never before, wreaking havoc on the battlefield with the Force."



2

2 The core cast is amazing

Not only has *Rogue One* managed to score the brilliant (and Academy Award- and BATFA-nominated) Felicity Jones as its protagonist, it's also got the likes of Forest Whitaker, Diego Luna, Ben Mendelsohn, Mads Mikkelsen and Donnie Yen in its core cast.



3

3 The Force Awakens' footsteps are followed

Episode VII surprised us all in the best way when, after six films that revolved around male Jedi, the Force-sensitive protagonist turned out to be a young woman. Despite the fact that over 95 per cent of the announced cast is male, it's still representing ladies in sci-fi with its lead.



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4

4 Gareth Edwards can handle it

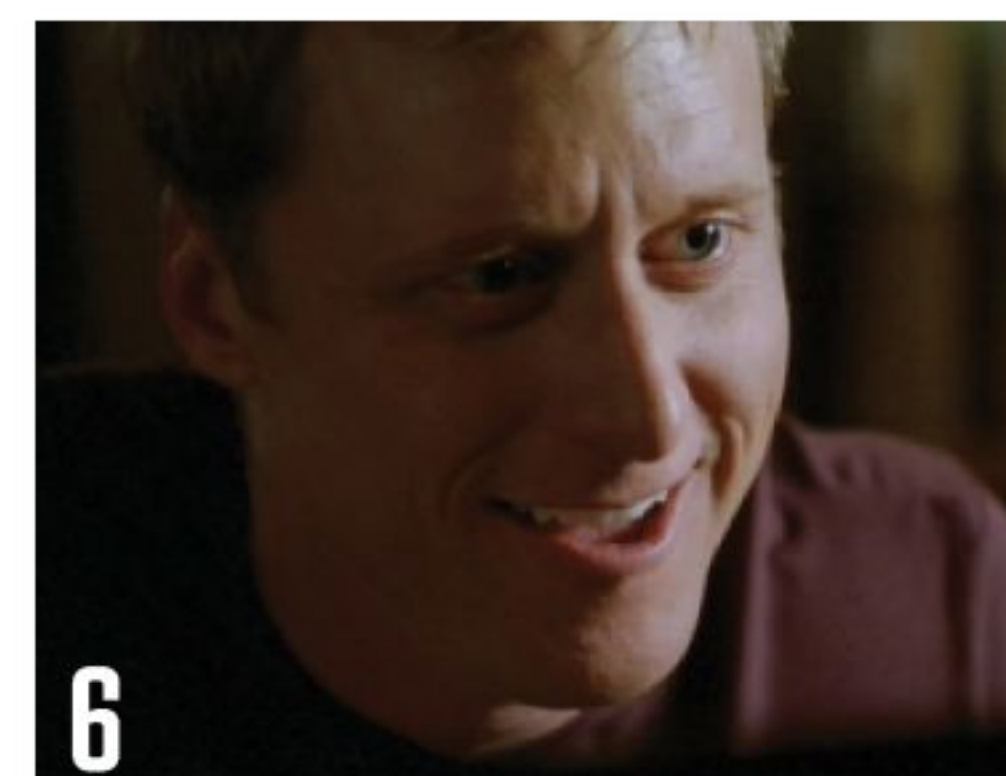
Director Gareth Edwards has proved he's more than capable of making stirring, big-scale sci-fi spectacles after his work on *Godzilla*. But perhaps most importantly, he has a genuine love for *Star Wars*. He's got the technical chops, but he also has the heart. We're sure he'll do us all proud.



5

5 It's a heist movie

After rumours regarding the plot of *Rogue One* started to collapse into bounty hunter theories and pirate head-canons, the 2015 *Star Wars* Celebration event confirmed that the film will kick off when, "a band of resistance fighters unite for a daring mission to steal the Death Star plans." Cool.



6

6 Alan Tudyk is probably playing a droid

Hardly any of the characters have been named yet, but it looks as if *Firefly*'s Alan Tudyk will be playing a CG droid. According to *Making Star Wars*, Tudyk will be an Imperial Enforcer Droid that has been reprogrammed to help the Rebels pull off their heist.



Alien: Covenant's cast is getting bigger. It now includes Benjamin Rigby, Jussie Smollett, Amy Seimetz, Carmen Ejogo and Callie Hernandez.

The latest *Spider-Man* solo movie is starting to take even more shape, as singer and actress Zendaya has been added in a "major role".

2

The number of holy men cast in *The Exorcist* TV movie, which will be played by Alfonso Herrera and Ben Daniels. Geena Davis is taking the lead role.



The number of times *Amityville: The Awakening*'s release has been rescheduled.

THE FEAR FACTOR

Fear The Walking Dead star Kim Dickens tells us the truth about Season Two WORDS ADAM TANSWELL

What excites you the most about the second season?

We left the first season with the devastation of Los Angeles, but we branch out to sea in Season Two. We head to the ocean, which has been very exciting and completely unexpected for me, because I had no idea where the trajectory of the story was going to take us when I started the show.

Is there a time jump between the two seasons?

Very little time has passed when we start Season Two. We pick up pretty much where we left off. It's within a few hours.

Are the infected a little more ragged in Season Two?

The infected are still pretty fresh because we haven't jumped too much in time. However, I think we will see how they then become ravaged by the intense sun that is here on the coast, and perhaps the sea water is going to have an effect on them as well.

How would you describe the pace of Season Two?

The pace really catches fire once they make the exodus from LA. Things become urgent, complex and confused as people try to figure out what to do next. It really catches fire, and there's a tinderbox of emotions on the boat as well.

How long do we have to wait before we see Strand's yacht, Abigail?

It's pretty quick. Without giving away any spoilers, I think it is pretty apparent where

things are heading – and they happen pretty quickly.

Season One was described as a family drama in an apocalyptic setting. What are the main themes of Season Two?

I think the main theme of Season Two [is] going to be displacement. There's been an exodus and we don't really have a home to go to, but we still have the family to keep together. The need to keep the family together, as well as the new people who have become a part of our family, is paramount. Now we have to deal with the displacement of where we go and how we maintain ourselves. How do we reinvent ourselves?

How has the death of Liza (Elizabeth Rodriguez) affected Madison and her family in Season Two?

That death hangs over us. In a way, her death is something that will haunt the second season. Travis (Cliff Curtis) has to reconcile. There's also a lot of grief and suffering that Chris (Lorenzo James Henrie) goes through from the loss of his mother. The huge loss that we experienced in the finale of Season One is not lost on any of us.

What does Madison think of Victor Strand (Colman Domingo), who saved her son in the first season?

The jury's still out for Madison on Strand. He's questionable, but at the same time he is seemingly offering us this safe haven, or at least a passage to a safe haven that we're struggling to find. Madison doesn't



Season Two starts with the cast literally out at sea.

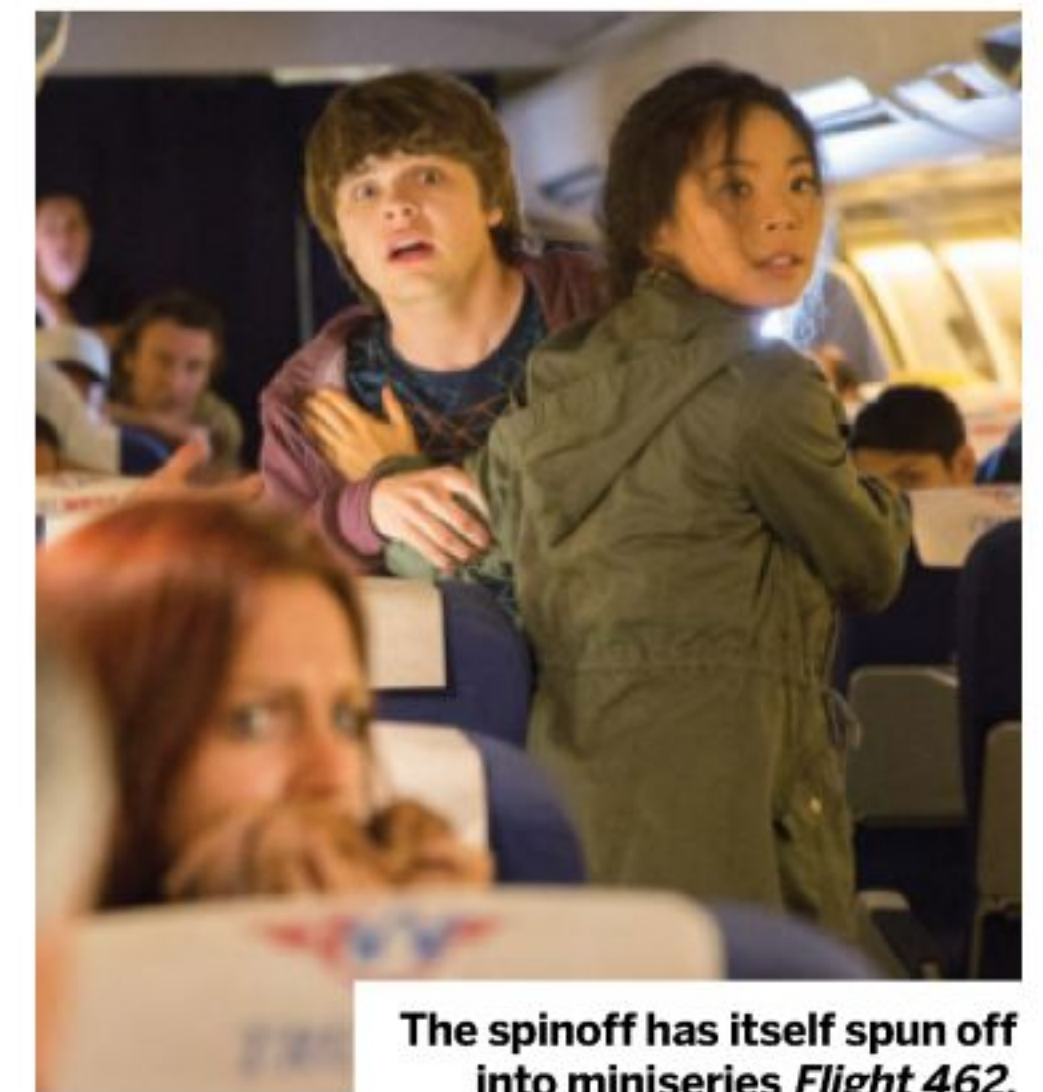
quite trust him yet. She doesn't know his motives, but this may be the best choice she has, so she has to go with him.

Will they butt heads?

It's going to be complex. Madison and Strand will definitely struggle when they're getting to know each other, but that's all I can say. You'll just have to watch and see...



Fear The Walking Dead Season Two will air on AMC Global from 11 April.



The spinoff has itself spun off into miniseries Flight 462.

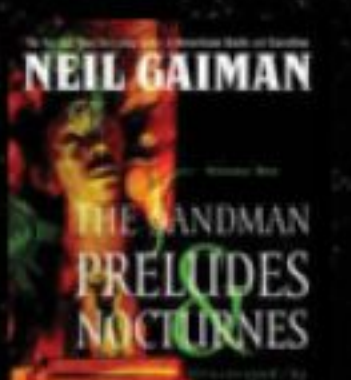


The cast of *The Dark Tower* movie has just grown that bit more, with *The Last Kingdom*'s Tom Taylor joining as the Gunslinger's companion, Jake Chambers.



May – The date AMC's *Preacher* will be airing Stateside.

Looks like we'll have to wait a bit longer for that *Sandman* movie, as Joseph Gordon-Levitt has left the production, citing that old 'creative differences' chestnut.



22



MARCELINE THE VAMPIRE QUEEN

We talk to Adventure Time's Olivia Olson about the new Marcy book and miniseries

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL

Everyone has a favourite *Adventure Time* character, but few of the inhabitants of Ooo have stolen scenes as much as Marceline. The vampiric songsmith has emerged as one of the show's MVPs, in large part because her history is as heartbreaking as her sharp tongue is hilarious.

Clearly we're not the only ones, as she's the focus of a new book and a miniseries. *The Enchiridion & Marcy's Super Secret Scrapbook* offers diary entries from her childhood, while *Stakes* is a six-part miniseries which sees the character delve into her past. We got the chance to speak to the voice of Marceline, and the book's co-author, Olivia Olson, about what makes the character, and the show, so special.

How did the book come about?

My dad [Martin Olson] had written *The Adventure Time Encyclopaedia*, and he plays my father on the show as well, Hunson Abadeer, so he wrote it in his voice as Hunson and I corrected it as Marceline on the side. When he was given

the opportunity to write *The Enchiridion*, it kind of turned into me writing the whole Marceline part.

Did they tell you anything about Marceline's back story when you first started on the show?

I learn as I go. They don't really tell us anything in advance, just when we record the episode, that's when I know what's going on in the crazy world of Ooo. I'm such a big fan of the show, so I'll go into the thing and be like, "Oh my god, I cannot believe that Marceline and Simon know each other!" I get so excited about little things like that because she has such a crazy back story.

With *Stakes* coming out you really get to dive into why she is the way she is. Not a lot of kids' shows are having these crazy complex storylines. I'm so fricking proud of how amazing it is, and it's almost like a little movie in a sense.

Her songs are amazing too!

When I don't have songs for a couple of episodes I'm like, "When am I going to be able to sing again?" It's such a different style of music that *Adventure Time* brings to the table. Marceline's songs are personal. They're not coming from a place of, "Here's this beautiful song I wrote." It's like, "Here's how I'm feeling." It's just

going to come out the way it comes out and it doesn't have to be perfect.

Marceline is very confident about who she is. Do you get feedback from the fans about it?

Yeah, it's something that I think is really cool about all of the characters in the show: they all know who they are. They're all very sure of themselves. I've had young girls come up to me and say, "I love Marceline just for the sheer fact that she's not afraid to be weird and different and dark, and I really relate to that, and that's made me not really care about my

image too much." I think that's important, because I grew up in the Barbie era. I used to cry because my mom would buy me black Barbie and I wanted the blonde Barbie, and my mom was like, "But you look like the black Barbie!" So I think it's really cool having these female characters who don't care about what they look like and they're confident in who they are.

The Enchiridion & Marcy's Super Secret



Scrapbook is out now from Titan Books. Catch *Adventure Time* every day at 5pm on Cartoon Network.



Adventure Time fans should definitely check out *Stakes*.



Netflix's *A Series of Unfortunate Events* is looking peculiar, as Patrick Warburton and Neil Patrick Harris have been cast as Lemony Snicket and Count Olaf respectively.

A reboot of *The Mummy* is first up in Universal's monsters universe, and is set to star Tom Cruise, Jake Johnson and Annabelle Wallis.

11

The number of shows renewed by The CW, including *iZombie*, *Arrow*, *Supernatural*, *Legends Of Tomorrow*, *The Vampire Diaries*, *The Originals*, *The 100* and *The Flash*.

4

The number of directors that have been connected to the remake of *The Crow*.

IT CAME FROM FRIGHTFEST...

We spoke to filmmakers Can Evrenol, Joe Begos and Tyler MacIntyre at FrightFest Glasgow about *Baskin*, *The Mind's Eye* and *Patchwork*

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL

Tyler MacIntyre's *Patchwork* was one of the films to impress at Glasgow FrightFest.

BASKIN



WHAT IS IT?

A dark, grimy journey into hell in which a group of cops answer a distress call at an old abandoned house. They soon find that it's not empty; in fact, it's full of terrifying cult members who want to do all sorts of horrible things to them.

THE MIND'S EYE



A straight-faced Eighties throwback from the man who brought us *Almost Human*, in which gifted telekinetic Zack Connors (Graham Skipper) must take on the evil doctor who's got his girlfriend. Let the blood-soaked psychic battles begin!

PATCHWORK



An affectionate homage to the horror comedies of Stuart Gordon and Frank Henenlotter about three women who somehow survive being killed, dismembered and sewn together, and decide to hunt down the maniac who turned them into a Frankenfemme.

GETTING IT MADE

"Eli Roth loved the short film and it just snowballed into this big thing, but then all the producers were falling through," remembers Evrenol. "I said, 'You know what, maybe I should finance this myself.' It's like almost the whole family savings!"

"It was difficult to get people on board because I wanted it to be so violent, I had actors in mind and I wanted to shoot for a long time," Begos tells us. "People want to make these movies in 18 days! Dude, we needed 18 days just to shoot the 45 effect shots!"

"It's a big ask!" laughs MacIntyre. "It's kind of a weird headspace, it's a big jump for some people. It is pretty bombastic, and we ask a lot of the audience in terms of suspension of disbelief! But I wasn't shopping the script around for very long."

SHOCK AND GORE

"The atmosphere and the way that some of violent scenes are done, I'm really happy, it brings a Grand Guignol to it," enthuses Evrenol. "But I'm surprised that there's so much reaction to it! You always feel your film's a bit lightweight compared to bigger films."

"Our effects guys are on point," Begos tells us. "It just keeps escalating. Producers asked why it had to be so violent and kept [on] about *Chronicle*, that's not the movie I want to make!"



HORROR INSPIRATION

"I'm as passionate about *He-Man* as David Lynch or Michael Haneke," laughs Evrenol. "It's flirting with arthouse cinema, and some very cliché Seventies, Eighties horror. It turns out something like Argento's *Inferno*, it's driving with imagery and atmosphere."

"I wished that somebody had made a brutal telekinetic movie," opts Begos. "*Death Wish* meets *Scanners*! I don't want to be like, 'Hey, isn't this movie so stupid!' I'm like 'No, motherfucker, this movie should have been on the shelf in 1991 next to fucking *Scanners 2*.'"

"All my favourite horror movies are horror comedies, or ones that have a wicked wit to them," McIntyre tells us. "It ended up taking on a much more slapstick horror kind of *Evil Dead 2* vibe, because that's all the horror movies we loved when we were kids."

Thanks to Frightfest

25m
To date, the number of views of the *Ghostbusters* trailer



After what's seemed like ages, Marvel has finally cast Iron Fist, picking Finn Jones (aka Loras Tyrell in *Game Of Thrones*) to play the latest budding Defender.

Who should play the young **Han Solo**?

50% Taron Egerton 22% Jack O'Connell 12% Jack Reynor 10% Alden Ehrenreich 6% Blake Jenner



JK Simmons has dived across the Marvel/DC barricade, being confirmed to play Jim Gordon in the *Justice League* moves – and probably more beyond them.

FIVE THINGS WITH SARAH BOLGER

The *Emelie* star on her range within genre roles

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL

1 Misadventures in babysitting

Sarah Bolger is no stranger to horror, but the deeply creepy *Emelie* sees the actress take on her most sinister role to date: a babysitter who is not who she claims to be. "I was drawn to her ability to create these chameleon-like facades, these characters within a character," she tells us. "She's so twisted as a person, she can completely shed these skins and become a whole new persona. That's quite scary, and I think there are people who have that ability. She is somewhat of a psychopath, is our *Emelie*! I kind of wanted you to think that potentially she's a witch. That's how I thought she envisioned herself."

2 Always check your references

As *Emelie* unfolds, the viewer is waiting for the title character to snap, but the film makes you wait for it, building a brilliant atmosphere of unease in the process. "The subtleties are why I wanted to do it," Bolger enthuses. "How long can I make you think something is wrong when everything is perfectly fine? Because it's not a home invasion; it's sort of a home-control movie! She's in control of her space and who she is or what she is, and it's cool to watch that journey. You're watching going, 'What?!? This girl's mad, and yet she's not mad!' You see no proof of it."

3 Do you know where your children are?

The film is as much the story of the three children as it is *Emelie*'s. "Working with children, it does get difficult," Bolger laughs. "Coming from being a child actor, I know that there's only so many hours you can work legally, and it's completely understandable, and it is hard because so many of my scenes where you're looking at my face, I'm looking at no one. There's no one there, the kids have gone home! It's 2am and I'm in Buffalo! It's kind of bizarre!"

4 Coming to America

Having started out as a child actress, the 25-year-old Bolger already has an amazing resume; including that sadly not-picked-up *Locke & Key* pilot ("I know! I loved that graphic novel, and it's a really, really beautiful pilot!"), but her career started with Jim Sheridan's acclaimed drama *In America*. "I was ten when I filmed it and 13 when it came out," she tells us. "I was blissfully unaware, running around getting to wear pretty dresses, meet famous people and live in LA. I was a kid, and I'm very happy to say that I remained a kid throughout. It didn't age me, and it didn't make me grow up. It just made me love the industry."

5 Keeping the audience on their toes

Emelie might come as a shock to those who know Bolger as Sleeping Beauty/Princess Aurora on *Once Upon A Time*, or her guest arc on *Agent Carter*, but she tells us that's exactly the point. "I play somewhat deranged folk, and then I play a princess!" she exclaims. "I'm very grateful that I have the ability and the faith from others to go off and play completely polar opposite characters. *Agent Carter*'s great, and Hayley Atwell is just my favourite to watch work. She's so brilliant, and I'm all for strong female roles. It's really nice to be able to go to work and create these different people every day, I'm very lucky."



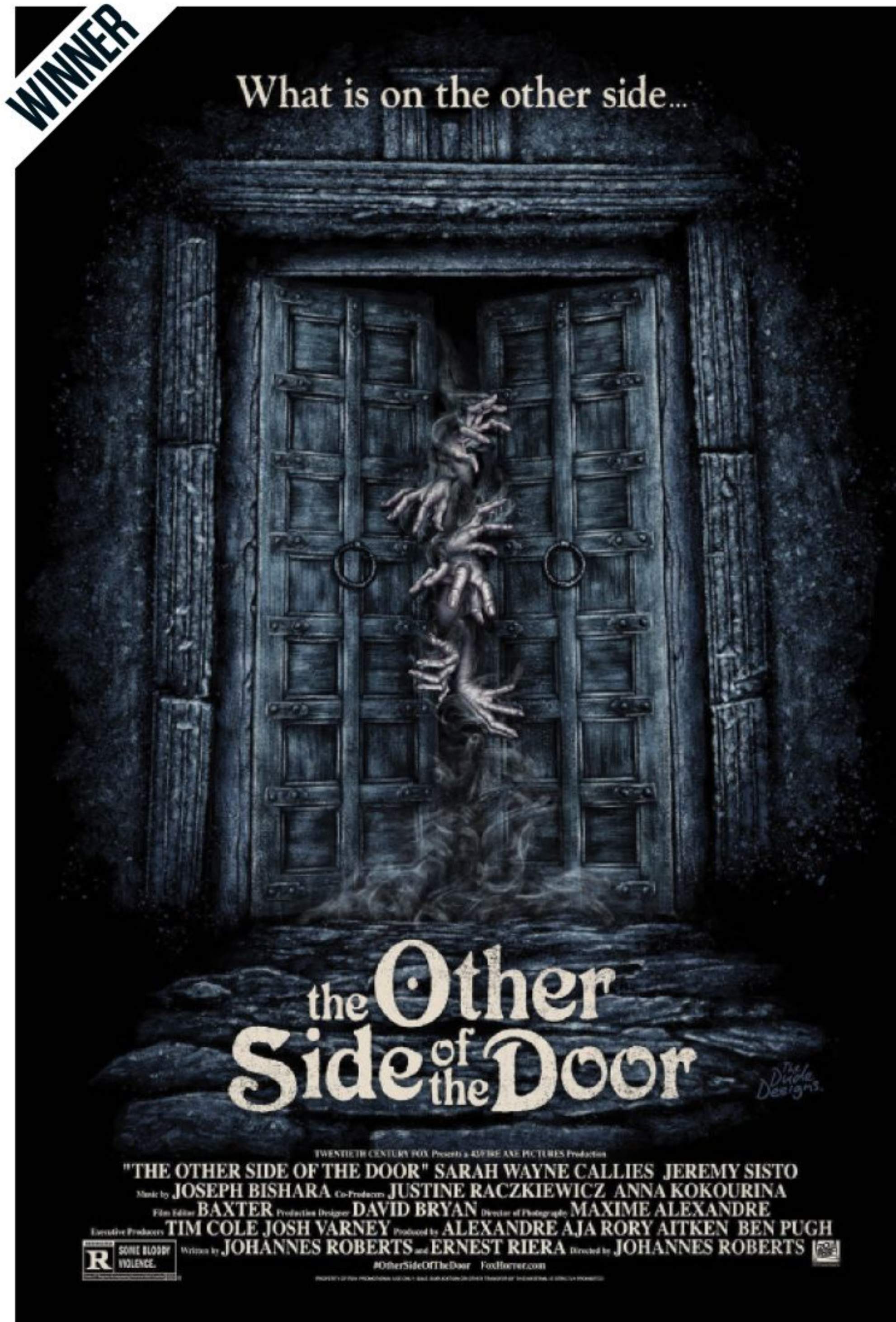
Emelie is available on DVD, and on VOD and download from FrightFest Presents now.



BEST OF THE BILLBOARDS

Celebrating the best, worst and weirdest movie posters out there

WORDS POPPY-JAY PALMER



THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR

Grief horror *The Other Side Of The Door* has consistently turned it up to 11 when it came to posters. The above is just one in a set of three, featuring sinister but gorgeous artwork that act as throwbacks to spooky Seventies ghost stories. We want them printed out and framed ASAP.



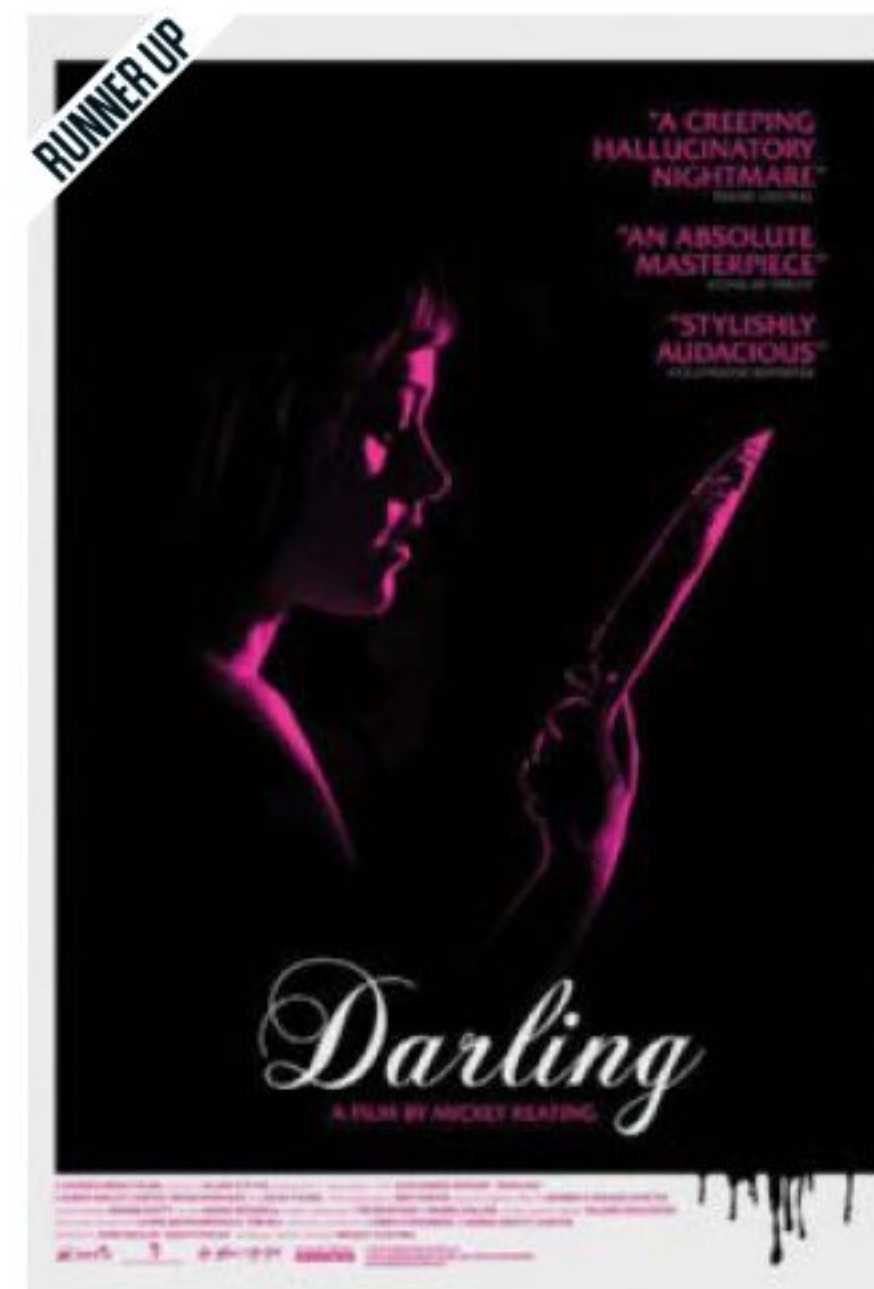
HIGH-RISE

All the posters for Ben Wheatley's hotly anticipated *High-Rise* have been stellar so far. But the recent kaleidoscope-inspired collection of character posters are the weirdest by a long shot, particularly the one four moustached Luke Evanses. The supermarket shelves, semi-mullet and confusing portable video camera just add to the beautiful weirdness.



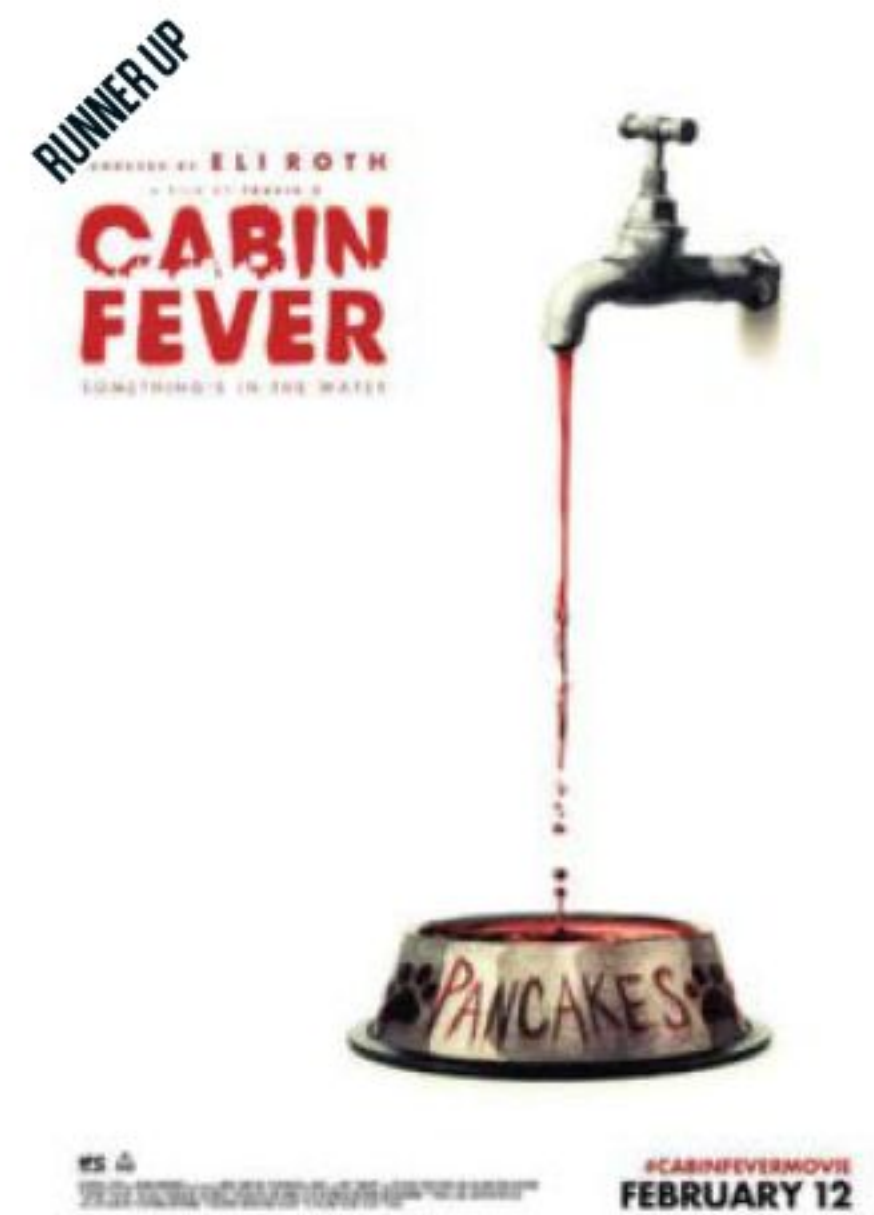
AMITYVILLE: THE AWAKENING

We were quite excited for Franck Khalfoun's *Amityville: The Awakening*; the spooky house premise sounded quite cool initially. But all excitement has now been violently quashed by this hideous Instagram-themed poster. Who came up with it? Awful. Worst of all, Bella Thorne's character's username is 'Rebelleous99'. Bebo called; it wants its username back.



DARLING

We're all about indie horrors and we're all about hot pink, so imagine our delight when we first saw this beauty for Mickey Keating's *Darling*.



CABIN FEVER

There's something entirely unsettling about this poster for *Cabin Fever*. It might be the unusual use of space. It might be the blood.



MEMORY BANK

Welcome to our kind of new regular Portal titbit, Memory Bank, where we flick through issues of the past from the SciFiNow archives, congratulate ourselves on the things we got right and cringe at the predictions we got completely wrong.

This month we're looking through issue 60, which hit the shelves four and a half years ago. The cover promised to reveal the shocking truth behind *The Walking Dead*. This was back when Rick was both clean-shaven and still wore clean t-shirts, and Carl was still able to get children's tickets at the cinema. As if to further highlight how long it's been, two thirds of our cover stars (Rick, Andrea and Dale) have been dead for years. So long, losers.

In the same issue, we also explored the latest instalment in everyone's favourite Washington State-set vampire romance, *Breaking Dawn: Part One*. Remember when *Twilight* was still a thing? We do, just about. The screenwriter spilled the beans on where the saga was heading – there were two films left at that point – and Robert Pattinson fretted about taking his shirt off. "I was like, 'I don't think I can wear a shirt in the sea,'" he said. "I look like an inflatable frankfurter."

Elsewhere, a little-known actor called Henry Cavill also graced the pages of issue 60 to talk about his new film, *Man Of Steel*. He got quite philosophical about it too. "Everything's an experience, a journey and an adventure," he told us. "If you're not enjoying it, then what's the point? So far it's been great. Sure, it's been terrible at points as well, but I've tried to take everything I could from those terrible, difficult moments I've had, and it's all part of the journey." Good on you, Superman. Good on you.

LET'S GO!

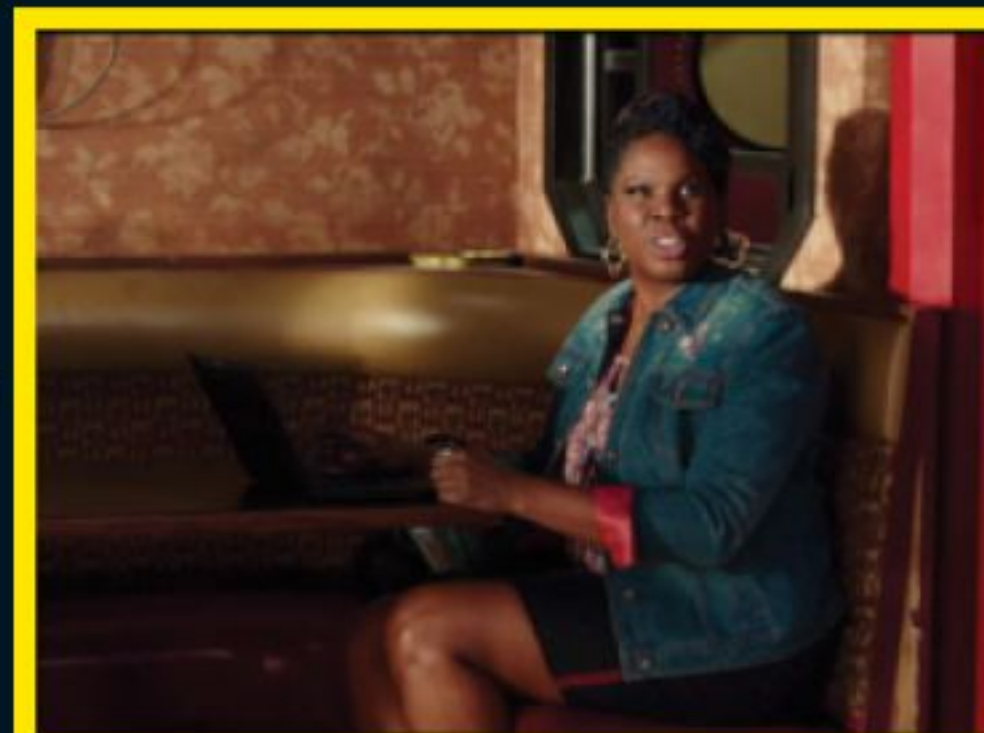
The all-new *Ghostbusters* make a bold entrance in the first trailer

WORDS POPPY-JAY PALMER

Some people are uncomfortable with the idea of women as *Ghostbusters*. Some want the exact same 1984 film again. Others are genuinely excited. Needless to say, the first action-packed trailer for *Ghostbusters* caused a stir...

Ghostbusters will be released in cinemas on 15 July

FOUR SCIENTISTS
SAVED NEW YORK



1 30 years ago...

The piano motif had many fans emotional from the start, but the assumption that Winston Zeddemore was a scientist had many furious.

2 SLIIIIIME!

Ahh, there we go! A ghost barfing ectoplasm into Kristen Wiig's face kick-starts the fun. Cue a super-cool electro version of the theme music.

3 Meet the new team

Melissa McCarthy breaks down the new Ghostbusters: doctor of particle physics Erin Gilbert, brilliant engineer Jillian Holtzmann, and herself.

4 Patty's joining the club

Leslie Jones kills it, but we're still left wondering why the only woman of colour is also the only one without cool science credentials.



5 "It's a Cadillac!"

The trailer's big reveal comes in the form of the brand new hearse-y Ecto-1. It's not really a reveal given Paul Feig has been tweeting photos of it all year.

6 Proton packs are back

The new Ghostbusters line up in their brand new jumpsuits and brand new proton packs. It's all very exciting, and pretty badass.

7 Slimer!

The highlight for many was a Slimer cameo. He was an absolute joy in the original *Ghostbusters*, so it's lovely to see him back and spookin'.

8 You da Holtzmann!

Without a doubt the best moment of the trailer. If there's going to be a stand-out character, it's Kate McKinnon's Holtzmann.



9 Here's Kevin

Chris Hemsworth plays Kevin, the receptionist. Could he be busting ghosts *and* answering phones? The visible jumpsuit indicates a maybe.

10 Talking shop

What we really learnt from the trailer is someone creates a device to amplify paranormal activities and ghosts can possess the human form.

11 "The devil is ALIVE!"

The power of Patty compels us to watch the trailer ten more times. Drink it in. Enjoy the jokes. Pause it on Holtzmann. Drink in Holtzmann.

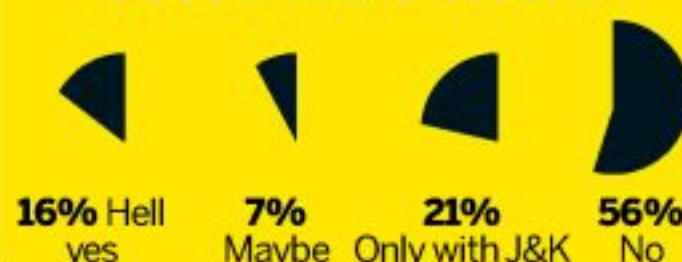
12 Who you gonna call?

If you liked it, yay! If you didn't, fine. If you claim it ruined your childhood, you need to go out for some fresh air and have a think.

Amazon has ordered a TV pilot for the remake of the brilliant Eighties cult comics cad *The Tick*. Wally Pfister is attached to direct.



Would you like to see a *Jump Street*/MIB crossover?



201

The number of *Big Bang Theory* episodes to air as of 10 March.



Westwood Productions has secured the TV rights to Edwin Charles Tubb's sci-fi series *Dumarest Of Terra*. *Hawk The Slayer* director Terry Marcel is on board.



The *Rebirth* series will commence with a Flash-led title, similar to the New 52.

DC REBORN

Every title from DC Comics is about to restart again from issue #1 WORDS CHRIS ANDERSON

With its movie and TV universes increasing the spotlight on its characters, DC Comics has decided to overhaul its titles as part of *Rebirth*. Similar to the New 52 reboot of 2011, *Rebirth* will see 32 titles either launching or relaunching from June onwards with issue #1 – the two exceptions being *Action Comics* and *Detective Comics*, which will revert to their original numbering from before the New 52.

There will also be changes to pricing and frequency. All comics will now be priced at \$2.99, but the more popular titles will be on sale twice a month. The bi-weeklies focus more on the characters linked to TV or film projects such as Batman, Wonder Woman and The Flash. There are also some new titles set to join them on the shelves, including *Green Lanterns*, *Batgirl & The Birds Of Prey*, *The Super-Man* and *Super Sons*.

Rebirth presents an opportunity to reintroduce fan-favourite characters previously erased by the New 52, rumoured to include the original Teen Titans, the Justice Society of America and the Legion of Superheroes. *Titans*, launching alongside a new *Teen Titans* comic suggests that at least one of these teams will return right away.

More will be revealed in May with an 80-page one-shot, *DC Comics Rebirth # 1*, written by chief creative officer Geoff Johns, with art by Ethan Van Sciver, Ivan Reis, Gary Frank and Phil Jimenez. The story will focus on The Flash, whose actions during the *Flashpoint* miniseries in 2011 led to the New 52 reboot. Whatever happens this time will shake up the DC Universe and restore certain elements from before that time.

DC Comics Rebirth #1 goes on sale 25 May.

HOT NEWS

DC Rebirth/Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6

NEWS

The new *Ultimate Spider-Man Vs The Sinister 6* will see Spidey leading a team.



SPIDEYS ASSEMBLE

HYDRA and the Sinister Six are bringing “true evil” to *Ultimate Spider-Man* WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL

Peter Parker is one of Marvel’s cockier superheroes, always as quick with a quip as he is with a thwip, but the new series of Marvel’s *Ultimate Spider-Man* will see ol’ web head coming up against a kind of villainy he’s not witnessed before: the Sinister Six teaming up with HYDRA.

“HYDRA’s always been looming,” says Marvel Animation’s senior vice president and creative director of animation, Eric Radomski. “We started with HYDRA as a big element of the *Avengers* series. It was a perfect opportunity to bring true evil into the midst of this challenge. Teamed up with the Sinister Six, it was a great opportunity for us to pit Spidey up against that true villain force and forcing him to see that he can’t do it on his own.”

This new season sees our hero take on a new responsibility: leadership. Having trained with SHIELD, Peter will have to

lead Miles Morales, Agent Venom, Iron Spider and Scarlet Spider against this dangerous enemy. “Just when he thought things were great, everything kind of blows up in his face,” laughs Radomski. “But that opportunity to really step up and put everything that he’s learned over the past three seasons into practice, I think he’s excited to do that. Now he’s got a real professional approach to it.”

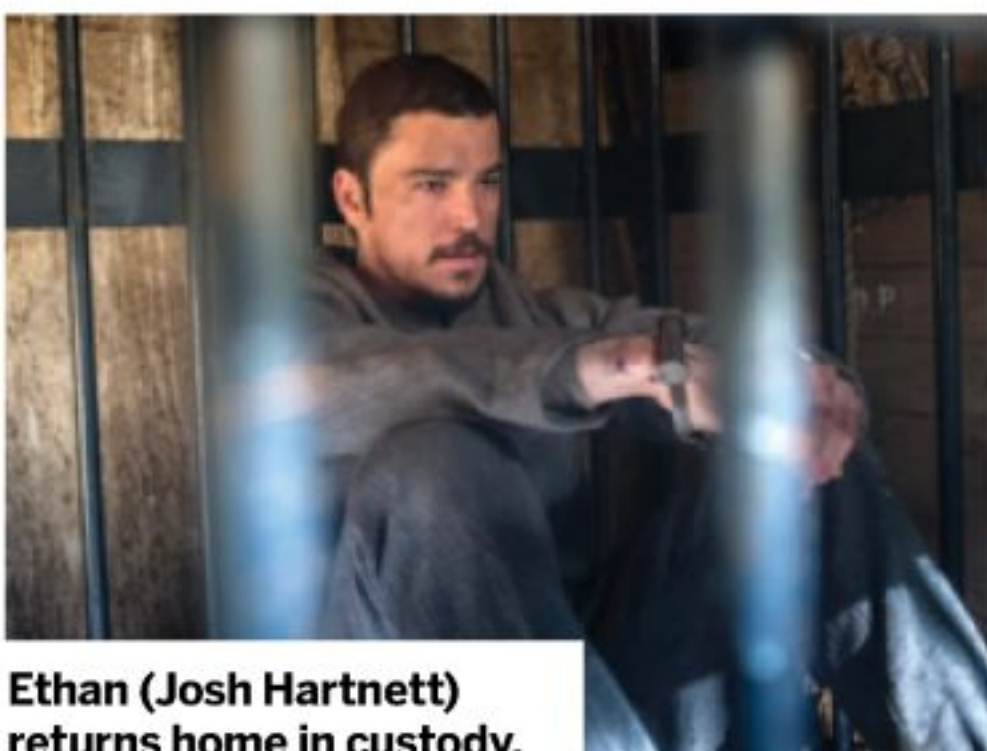
This season will also have an added treat for Marvel fans, as *Agents Of SHIELD* stars Iain De Caestecker and Elizabeth Henstridge will play Fitz/Simmons on the show. “It’s always fun for the fans and it really helps to unify the universe,” he enthuses. “It’s fun to make them part of the family.”

Catch brand new episodes of *Marvel’s Ultimate Spider-Man Vs The Sinister 6* every Saturday on Disney XD.

Will Peter have what it takes to take on HYDRA and the Sinister Six?



Hard times are ahead for Sir Malcolm (Timothy Dalton) and Vanessa (Eva Green).



Ethan (Josh Hartnett) returns home in custody.

The great Patti LuPone returns as Joan Clayton.



Ethan's lycanthropic secret is out in the open now.

GET BEHIND ME, SATAN

Why you need to get excited about *Penny Dreadful* Season Three

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL

After a barnstorming second season finale, John Logan's Gothic horror *Penny Dreadful* left its characters in ruins. Now, it's back to drag them through hell once more. We spoke to producer Chris King about what's in store for our favourite tortured souls and damaged creatures.

Lost souls

They vanquished Evelyn Poole and the devil himself, but Vanessa Ives (Eva Green), Sir Malcolm (Timothy Dalton), Ethan Chandler (Josh Hartnett) and Victor Frankenstein (Harry Treadaway) didn't get a happy ending. "Ethan is on his way to America to be hung for his crimes, Sir Malcolm is in Africa burying Sembene, and poor Vanessa is alone and lost and without her God and her faith, and feeling as if there's no hope for her," explains King. What about the wicked Lily (Billie

Piper) and Dorian Grey (Reeve Carney)? "That storyline is absolutely phenomenal!"

A new friend for Vanessa

Reeling from Season Two, Vanessa will find help in Dr Seward (Patti LuPone), after her guest role as The Cut-Wife in Season Two. "Vanessa is alone at the start of Season Three, so John wanted to give her a confidante," he says. "Our Dr Seward is an alienist. Psychology and therapy was in its early stages, vocalising and verbalising your issues, especially as a woman, was looked down upon. So it's quite a radical thing for Vanessa to do."

Ethan Chandler's dark past

Ethan has always been one of the most mysterious characters in the show, and King tells us that this is the year when his dark secrets will be revealed as he arrives in the American West. "We're going to

get a better understanding of Ethan, and why and how he became the werewolf, and what has been driving him to leave America and his family. Plus, we finally get to meet his father. It is such an honour to have Brian Cox playing Jared Talbot, he's just chilling in his performance, and I hope the audience loves it as much as we do."

Classic characters, new faces

In addition to putting a new spin on Dracula's Dr Seward, Season Three will also introduce Dr Henry Jekyll, but with a *Penny Dreadful* twist. "Our Dr Jekyll is of Indian descent," says King. "We use the racism he had to endure as a driving force behind why he is seeking new ways of dealing with mental issues and the person inside of him through his research."

Penny Dreadful Season Three begins on 3 May on Sky Atlantic.

ANGEL OR DEVIL?

Calculating the chance of new character villainy



JARED TALBOT (BRIAN COX)

Ethan ran away from his family for a reason, and we're confident that his father is a big part of that.



DR ALEXANDER SWEET (CHRISTIAN CARMAGO)

A zoologist at the Natural History Museum and a friend for Vanessa. Seems friendly, so obviously sinister.



DR SEWARD (PATTI LUPONE)

This is a hard one to call. Vanessa's therapist seems complicated enough to be either, and LuPone has been heroic on the show before.



DR HENRY JEKYLL (SHAZAD LATIF)

A doctor who creates a monstrous alter-ego he can't control? That sounds more like tortured hero than sinister villain in *Penny Dreadful*.



KAETENAY (WES STUDI)

Teased as having a connection to Ethan, and a new ally for Sir Malcolm, so we're confident that Studi's badass-ness will be used for good.



IT'S NOT THE YEARS, IT'S THE MILEAGE

Indy's coming back

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL

Talk about the new *Indiana Jones* movie has never really died down. Sure, we all hated *Kingdom Of The Crystal Skull*, but you don't throw out a character as inspired as Dr Henry Walton Jones just because of one bad movie. Which is why over the last few years we've heard various rumours and stories about what a new film would look like, including the 'Chris Pratt as a young Indy' one that hung around long enough to actually be plausible.

However, all of that is now moot, as Disney has announced that a new film from Steven Spielberg starring Harrison Ford has been confirmed, and it's coming in 2019. So, let's get into how we're feeling.



Steven Spielberg is directing it

Obviously, this is good news. While we would concede that there must be filmmakers out there who could direct an *Indiana Jones* movie, there's only one director we can accept without quarrel or quibble: The Beard. With him on board, we're guaranteed a film that feels like it's part of the series. Also worth noting: Kathleen Kennedy and Frank Marshall are on board.



No George Lucas

There'll only be one beard behind the camera this time (well, maybe not technically but you know what we mean), as George Lucas will not be involved. Prior to *Crystal Skull*, we'd have been worried. Post-*Crystal Skull* (which is apparently mostly his fault) and *The Force Awakens*, we're a little more relaxed about it. There's something sad about the original team being no more, but there's a chance that it might be for the best... sorry, George.

Harrison Ford will return for the fifth *Indiana Jones* movie.



Harrison Ford is back

This is the big one. Chris Pratt (*Jurassic World*) is great, we can all agree on that. But as long as there is breath left in Harrison Ford's body, he is Indiana Jones, and he was bloody great in *The Force Awakens*. Now, the speculation is that there will be younger characters introduced, possibly to keep the franchise going. Which brings us to a point of concern...



Potential for 'another Shia'

Should we be worried about this? I mean, they wouldn't go down that road again, would they? The problem with introducing younger characters alongside Indy is that we'll inevitably compare them to Ford, which is a surefire way to show that they don't measure up. Maybe one of the short-listed actors for young *Han Solo* has got the goods.



Kingdom Of The Crystal Skull was really bad

We can't responsibly overlook this fact. Remember how excited we all were for *Indiana Jones And The Kingdom Of The Crystal Skull*? Now, remember the sadness and disappointment that followed. It could happen again. On the plus side, now that we've had a bad one, maybe they know what not to do. That means no aliens (trans-dimensional beings, was it? How could we forget. That was a sparkling piece of dialogue), no nuking the fridge and... a better story, generally. Marion can come back, though. We've got absolutely no problem with Marion.



Harrison Ford is 73

And what?

The as-yet untitled *Indiana Jones* movie will be released in 2019.



SCIFINOW DOES YouTube

Subscribe to our YouTube channel for exclusive interviews and reviews!

Get the latest news about all the biggest sci-fi, fantasy and horror films and TV shows in stunning 1080p with SciFiNow's very own YouTube channel.

Batman V Superman: Dawn Of Justice gets put under the microscope as we break down the five most important things you need to know about the ultimate smackdown film in our video review, courtesy of the incomparable Jonathan Hatfull.

In our other most recent uploads, Poppy-Jay Palmer takes a look at the JJ Abrams-produced hit science fiction thriller *10 Cloverfield Lane*, and Katherine McLaughlin ventures beyond the walls of freaky horror *The Other Side Of The Door*. *The Walking Dead* alum Sarah Wayne Callies talks to us about the horror of grief, while director Johannes Roberts takes time to discuss *Pet Sematary*, of all things.

Take a step back a little further in time, and you can watch our easily digestible reviews of the biggest films of the last year, encompassing the likes of *Deadpool*, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* and *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part 2*. We also head to the red carpet for the European premiere of *The Last Witch Hunter* to find out why Vin Diesel is such a massive fantasy geek, and hang out with the cast of the brilliant *Sense8* for a behind-the-scenes look at all your favourite moments.

Keep calling back to the SciFiNow magazine YouTube channel for new and exciting videos that you will find nowhere else.

TOPP OF THE CARDS

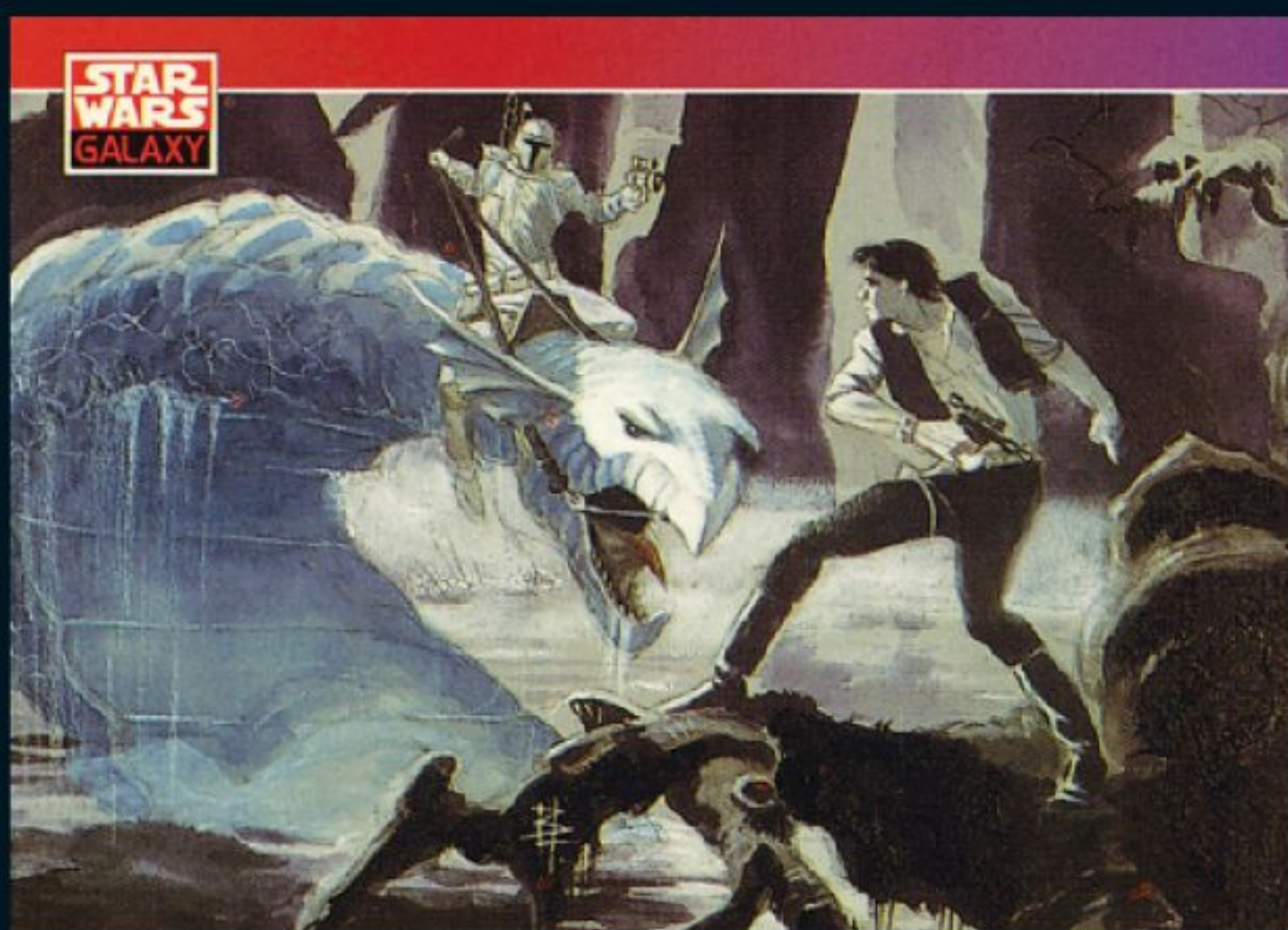
Go back to a more simple time with this collection of classic Star Wars cards

WORDS STEVE WRIGHT

A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, Topps Trading Cards were all the rage, collecting together a series of beautiful illustrations from the *Star Wars* saga that you could exchange with friends or simply collect. Now, you can relive this time with *Star Wars Galaxy*, which groups together this piece of cinema history in one lovely collection.

Containing stunning interpretations of classic moments from a number of different artists, all in their own distinctive styles, this is something every *Star Wars* fans should have in their lives. To give you a taste, here is a collection of some of the cards included in the book. The Force is strong in this one...

Star Wars Galaxy: The Original Topps Trading Card Series by The Topps Company, Gary Gerani and Lucasfilm Ltd is available to buy now.



HOT TOPICS

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JOSEPH GORDON-LEVITT QUILTS THE SANDMAN MOVIE, DAMMIT
tinyurl.com/h8wjmrq



BRYAN FULLER: AMERICAN GODS "HAS A FANTASTIC ARC"
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THE PREDATOR: GET YOUR FIRST LOOK AT SHANE BLACK'S SEQUEL
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THE DARK TOWER CONFIRMS ELBA AND MCCONAUGHEY
tinyurl.com/jmst3nh



SPIDER-MAN REBOOT CASTS ZENDAYA IN A MAJOR ROLE
tinyurl.com/humoamg

COSPLAY OF THE MONTH

Send your cosplay to @SciFiNow
or Facebook.com/SciFiNow



LEVI ACKERMAN (ATTACK ON TITAN)

COSPLAYER: REI EVANS **FROM:** COLCHESTER, ESSEX **PHOTOGRAPHER:** LEILOU COSPLAY PHOTOGRAPHY **FACEBOOK:** /REIOTTHEDAY

1 THE CHARACTER

Attack On Titan has become a cult success as both an anime and a manga series, and I quickly became sucked in by all the characters' back stories and personalities. The character Levi stood out to me in particular as having a unique personality, as well as having an interesting look. He was my first proper cosplay, which was extra challenging due to the make-up required, but definitely worth it as it improved my skills.

2 THE COSTUME

Though I did not make the jacket, the design required extra additions that I needed to make from scratch. The leg pieces needed to be a specific colour to match the rim of the jacket. The main difficulty here was keeping the leg pieces and the belts up. I ended up sewing the material on to my trousers and pinning the belts with small safety pins. This kept them secure throughout the day at conventions.

3 THE DESIGN

There are several variants on Levi's outfits. I chose this particular design because it was a type that I had not seen many cosplayers try out and I wanted to be original. The original design is from a game called *Wings Of Counter-Attack*, which features many different costume designs. I went with this version because I liked the colour and style of the jacket compared the likes of his Survey Corps uniform.

4 THE ACCESSORIES

The accessories are all meant to be very functional and needed to match the style of the jacket. For the leg pieces, the fabric had to stretch so that it would hold up through the day. This was a challenge for me, but I eventually settled on sewing the material to the trousers to ensure that they would stay up. My friend crafted the swords by hand, and I have recently begun re-painting and varnishing them to keep them looking their best.

DAYS OF FUTURE NOW
Here are some upcoming UK conventions that you can't afford to miss...

Granite City Comic-con
29 April – 2 May
The Hilton Treetops, Aberdeen
GraniteCityComicCon.co.uk
Adults £12.50-£20, children £4.50
The first Granite City Comic-con was a huge hit, so get yourself up to Aberdeen for what's sure to be a bigger bash.

EM-Con
30 April – 1 May
Motorpoint Arena, Nottingham
EM-Con.co.uk
Adults £10-£160, children free*
Meet the casts from your favourite shows at one of the Midlands' most popular cons.

Folkestone Film, TV and Comic Con
7 May
Folkestone Academy, Folkestone
tinyurl.com/hnwjt9c
Adults £7, children free-£4
This year's special guests include Peter Davison and Sylvester McCoy.

WoWFest
1-28 May
Liverpool (check website for event locations)
writingonthewall.org.uk
Pay per event
Check out Liverpool's month-long Writing on the Wall festival to listen to authors, poets, journalists and more.
*conditions apply

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ENTRY TICKETS AND PHOTO SESSIONS AVAILABLE IN ADVANCE ONLINE OR ON THE DAY. FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT THE WEBSITE.

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DOCTOR WHO

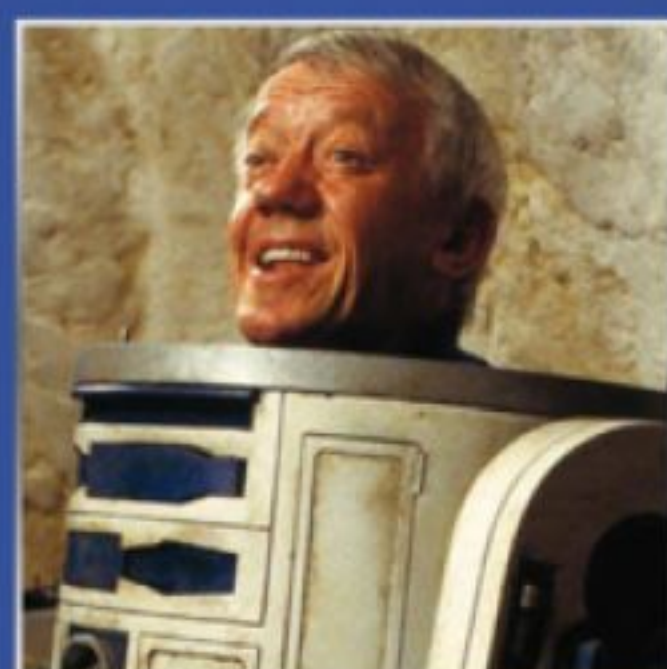
DANNY JOHN-JULES
RED DWARF



JIMMY VEE
DOCTOR WHO



PAUL DARROW
BLAKES 7



KENNY BAKER
STAR WARS



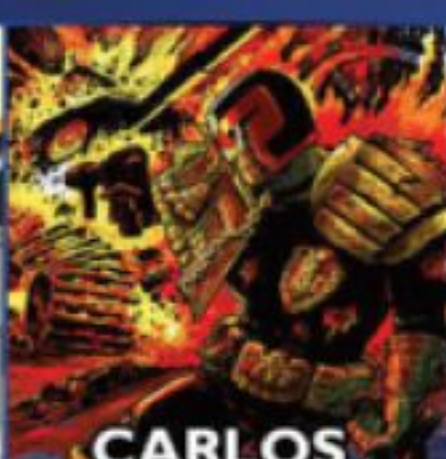
JOHN LEVENE
DOCTOR WHO



ROBERT RANKIN
AUTHOR



DAVE WINDETT



CARLOS EZQUERRA



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JESUS MERINO



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LEE SULLIVAN



WITH MANY MORE GUESTS STILL TO BE ANNOUNCED AN EVENT THAT SHOULD NOT BE MISSED!

STANDARD ENTRY: ADULT £8 & CHILD £4 (11+), EARLY ENTRY (FROM 9AM) £15. OPEN 9AM - 6PM

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COVER FEATURE

Captain America: Civil War

CIVIL CAPTAIN

WORDS POPPY-JAY PALMER
INTERVIEWS STEVE WRIGHT

CAPTAIN AMERICA

CHOOSE Y

WHILE CAPTAIN AMERICA LEADS THE WAY IN THE NAME OF FREEDOM, WE DEBATE WHY THE SOKOVIA ACCORDS GO AGAINST ALL HE'S FOUGHT FOR, AS WELL AS VIOLATE THE FOURTH AMENDMENT...

THE UPCOMING BATTLE BETWEEN CAPTAIN AMERICA AND IRON MAN COULD HAVE EASILY BEEN THE FIGHT OF THE YEAR, HAD WE NOT JUST SEEN THE OTHER FIGHT

of the year a couple of weeks ago in *Batman V Superman: Dawn Of Justice*. So why should we care about these guys? They've been in movies together before. What's the big deal? *Captain America: Civil War* isn't just two titans coming together to brush shoulders. This is the dismantling of a years-long friendship. This is a team being ripped apart by politics and doing what they each believe to be the Right Thing.

When we left the Avengers at the end of *Age Of Ultron*, Steve Rogers and Tony Stark were on relatively good terms. If not friends, they were

partners and reliable team members. Sure, Stark messed up in a big way by creating Ultron in the first place, but it was an accident. His intentions were good. Rogers certainly knew that, which is why he was so willing to get the Avengers to assemble once again so they could work as a team to clear up the mess together.

Unfortunately for everyone, the mess they were trying to clear up caused perhaps an even bigger one. In destroying Ultron and his minions in Sokovia, they unintentionally demolished almost the entirety of its capital, Novi Grad. You don't just trash a whole city without anyone taking notice. Which brings us to *Captain America: Civil War*.

WAR
AMERICA

I R O N M A N

YOUR SIDE

TONY STARK IS USUALLY ON THE SIDE OF WHAT'S RIGHT, BUT IS FREEDOM A GOOD ENOUGH PRICE TO PAY FOR PUBLIC SAFETY? WE MAKE A POINT FOR WHY YOU SHOULD BE TEAM IRON MAN...

In response to the Ultron attack, the Avengers are made out to be the bad guys. They have been demoted from heroes to vigilantes. Governing bodies get involved, and it's quickly decided that people with super-human powers probably shouldn't be allowed to run around doing whatever the hell they like just because they personally believe it's for the greater good.

To be honest, it's a fair point. In the minds of many, stopping sentient robots and demigods hell-bent on wiping out the human race isn't a good enough reason to tear down whole cities while in pursuit of them. And thus, the Sokovia Accords were created.

According to a flyer that comes with the *Marvel Cinematic Universe Phase*

Two Box Set Collection, the agreement specified in the Sokovia Accords is as follows: "In accordance with the document at hand, I hereby certify that the below mentioned participants, peoples and individuals, shall no longer operate freely or unregulated, but instead operate under the rules, ordinances and governances of the aforementioned United Nations panel, acting only when and if the panel deems it appropriate and/or necessary."

And then there's a whole load of blank space for Clint Barton, Wanda Maximoff, James Rhodes, Steve Rogers, Natasha Romanoff, Anthony Stark, Vision and Sam Wilson to sign their freedom and autonomy over to the US government.





CIVIL WAR CRAFT

MARK MILLAR LOOKS BACK AT HIS CLASSIC STORY TEN YEARS ON...

Where did the idea for *Civil War* come from?

I actually stole it from an *X-Men* project I was planning to do... but didn't get around to writing. I wanted to move the whole Xavier/Magneto best-friends split forward a generation, so Cyclops and Wolverine were going to have this massive fall-out after the murder of Xavier and the mutants were going to split down the middle. I was at a Marvel conference a year later, and we had absolutely nothing for a summer crossover the company had made a gap for, so I cannibalised this idea, and the split became Captain America and Iron Man instead.

The political themes in *Civil War* still seem relevant today. Would you agree?

I'm afraid it always will be. The people and the elites are in a constant power-struggle and as technology advances that grip by a tiny number of people in charge

of us has been tightening. Captain America sees this because he was displaced for three generations, and is horrified by the CCTV cameras and soldiers standing in Grand Central Station.

Iron Man has the perfectly logical argument that the superheroes should be an arm of the government and, at least, licensed like cops because they're carrying something a lot more dangerous than guns. I think the story worked because these guys are both right. They both have very valid arguments, and both are concerned with public safety.

What have you thought of the film's trailers so far?

I think they look pretty decent. We're 16 years into these Marvel movies now, and the trick will be making it look fresh. There's a lot of other things out this year competing for our attention, and we're all very much living in that post-*Star Wars* world now, so it has a fight ahead of it.



© Gage Skidmore

THE BASIS OF CAPTAIN AMERICA'S ARGUMENT IS THE SAME AS ALWAYS: FREEDOM. HAVING HAD EXPERIENCE ON THE FRONT LINES OF THE BATTLEFIELD IN WORLD

War II against not only Hitler, but the Red Skull too, he knows what it's like to have your rights taken away from you, and he's not going to let it happen to anyone else.

What makes a hero has been debated again and again, in *Captain America*, in *Spider-Man*, even in *Deadpool*, and it's always the same. What separates superheroes from people with super-human powers are the choices they make. Making that one call, that small but significant decision to save someone or spare someone is the line between becoming a hero and turning into the villain. From even before the moment Steve Rogers was injected with Super-Soldier serum, he's been making a conscious effort to make the right call.

But how are you supposed to make calls like that when the government has you on such a short leash? There's no more swooping in and saving the day, not if it's deemed to cause too much paperwork. You can forget about trying to save a family from a burning building or a school bus full of children on a class trip if the rescue mission is going to result in expensive destruction of property. This is why Steve Rogers has such a problem with the Sokovia Accords. He's not ready to make

the switch from 'American hero' to 'government tool'. And that's basically what is going on here; the powers that be – in this case, the United States government and the United Nations – have realised that they could have a submissive army with super-human

BRANDON ROUTH #TeamCap

"I would have said earlier that I would have leaned towards Iron Man given that Ray [Palmer, his character in *DC's Legends Of Tomorrow*] is more like him as far as the suit in some ways, although he is very different in terms of he can shrink and do other things, but he's not necessarily like Tony Stark as a character and who he is a person. He is more like Cap! Having worked with Chris, he's a good guy and he's done a fantastic job with the role. I'm very excited and happy for him to have such a huge impact for that role. I'm going to have to go with Cap!"

abilities at their fingertips which they could utilise wherever, and whenever, they deemed it necessary. If only they could get said army to agree to it. The Avengers would have no choice in the matter. They'd have no opportunity to make the call. By signing the Sokovia



Once again, Cap (Chris Evans) finds himself on the wrong side of the law.

“**TONY SCREWED UP;
THERE’S NO WAY
AROUND IT**”
CHRISTOPHER MARKUS



Cap's defence of Bucky (Sebastian Stan) puts him at odds with Tony Stark (Robert Downey Jr).



Civil War will mark the first MCU appearance of the Black Panther (Chadwick Boseman).

WHEN TAKEN AT FACE VALUE, EVERYTHING TEAM IRON MAN STANDS FOR SOUNDS LIKE SOME SORT OF FASCIST REGIME: TONY, NATASHA, RHODEY, T'CHALLA

and Vision seem not only willing, but eager to sign their rights to privacy and freedom away to the US government and military services, and sell out their friends on Team Cap in the process. But like with Team Cap, the reasoning behind their decision is more complex than what's presented on the surface.

It's easy to see why Stark in particular would want to be moderated; after everything that happened in *Age Of Ultron*, he's wracked with guilt. People lost their lives, all because of an AI that went rogue. It's logical for him to want his actions regulated. That way, nothing like Sokovia can ever happen again.

Stark has a history of trying to fix things he's done wrong in the past. He's proved himself not to be one who would sign controversial government documents without having a very good reason for it.

"Tony screwed up, there's no way around it," says screenwriter Christopher Markus when we spoke to him about the motives behind Iron Man's actions. "And something must be done in his opinion, so he has a really good standpoint. Plus, things happen in the course of the film that bolster his emotions all the more."

In the words of Peter Parker's Uncle Ben, with great power comes great responsibility. But who does it rest

with? Can a group of people with super-human abilities really be the ones to decide who needs saving and who doesn't? Can anyone really make that call? The Sokovia Accords suggest not. It shouldn't be about following your conscience, or even your morals. When you let your emotions and opinions get in the way, innocent people get hurt.

The main argument – or Cap's argument, anyway – against the Sokovia Accords is that they're a violation of freedom. But when it comes to people's lives, is freedom more important than safety? The government's aim isn't to stop superheroes having freedom; it's to put a stop to more unnecessary deaths, and the devastating results of tearing down cities and their inhabitants while hunting a villain on the loose.

With Cap and Iron Man quickly going from friends to opponents in *Civil War*, was it difficult for Markus and co-writer Stephen McFeeley to write both heroes as having contrasting opinions without making one of them a villain? "You know what? No," says Markus. "I thought it would be, because that's how it plays out in the comics, but Tony turned out to have extremely good reasons for taking his side. Cap always seems like the instinctive hero, just because you love superheroes. He's fighting to keep them the way that they are, and that seems right."

CONTINUED ON **PAGE 27**

COVER FEATURE

Captain America: Civil War

Accords, they would be signing away their freedom, something Captain America, among all others, has fought so hard to protect.

The Sokovia Accords are also a massive invasion of privacy, not to mention a clear violation of the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution. The Constitution states, “the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated...” In short, the Avengers are being treated like criminals. The government has absolutely no right in demanding its citizens with super-human abilities step forward and identify themselves. Not when they’ve done so little to deserve it. Besides, we all remember what happened last time a governing body rounded up a specific group of people and ordered them to register themselves. Throughout history, that practice has never ended well.

Possibly the only thing Captain America rates as highly as freedom is friendship. His whole persona, though clueless and even a little stern at times, is based on his loyalty towards the people he cares for. The whole last acts of both *The First Avenger* and *The Winter Soldier* revolved around him trying to save Bucky Barnes, whether it was from the Nazis, from HYDRA or from himself. So if you combine that with the fact that – from the looks of the trailers – Bucky’s freedom appears to be at stake, you can damn well bet that the Captain will do everything in his power to stop the Sokovia Accords going ahead.

Captain America: Civil War screenwriter, Christopher Markus, and his writing partner, Stephen McFeeley, had to stare into the star-spangled void and take a look at both Cap and Iron Man’s psyches to make both of their arguments convincing for the film. So what is Cap’s main motivation? Is it his need for universal freedom, or is it his loyalty towards Bucky?

“I don’t know if there’s a mathematical split, but one feeds into the other,” Markus informs us. “Cap disagrees in principle with the Sokovia Accords. I don’t think that would have led to a fight, because both Tony and Cap are, on some level, reasonable people... I think that was partly where the [*Civil War*] comic became strident, in a way. It wasn’t an emotional reason for the fighting; it was a political reason.



Cap and Sam Wilson (Anthony Mackie) meet T'Challa in his civilian guise.

So Bucky and the things he forces Cap to do – I don’t mean at gunpoint, I mean the situations Bucky puts Cap in – are really what cause the physical conflict of the movie, so we didn’t have to have people punching each other over a standpoint.”

The film has been adapted from Mark Millar’s extremely popular comic book *Civil War*, which was first published ten years ago. As it has become such an iconic story with fans, Markus and McFeeley had it in mind for the Marvel Cinematic Universe from quite early on. “We spent a few weeks talking about what *Captain America 3* would be just in general,” Markus tells us. “The meatiest material we had available to us always seemed to be the conflicts that were already there – the resentments that had grown between him and Tony, the relationship with Bucky – and it just came to a point where we were beginning to write *Civil War* without really calling it *Civil War*. We were just like, ‘Let’s go, let’s tackle the thing that we’re afraid of saying we’re doing!’”

Like with most comic-book movies, *Civil War* won’t be a straight-up adaptation for the source material, but there were a few scenes from Millar’s story that Markus and McFeeley immediately recognised as ‘must-haves’. “Obviously there’s the few really iconic frames of Tony and Cap slamming into each other, the one where Tony’s blasting into



It’s a confrontation that has been teased since their first meeting.



Civil War will test Cap’s ethos to breaking point.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

IT BASICALLY COMES DOWN TO FREEDOM VERSUS SECURITY

CHRISTOPHER MARKUS

IWAN RHEON #TeamIronMan

"Ooh, I don't know... Team Iron Man, I'd have to say. I'm not massively versed in that whole thing, but I think Team Iron Man. Do they fight each other?"

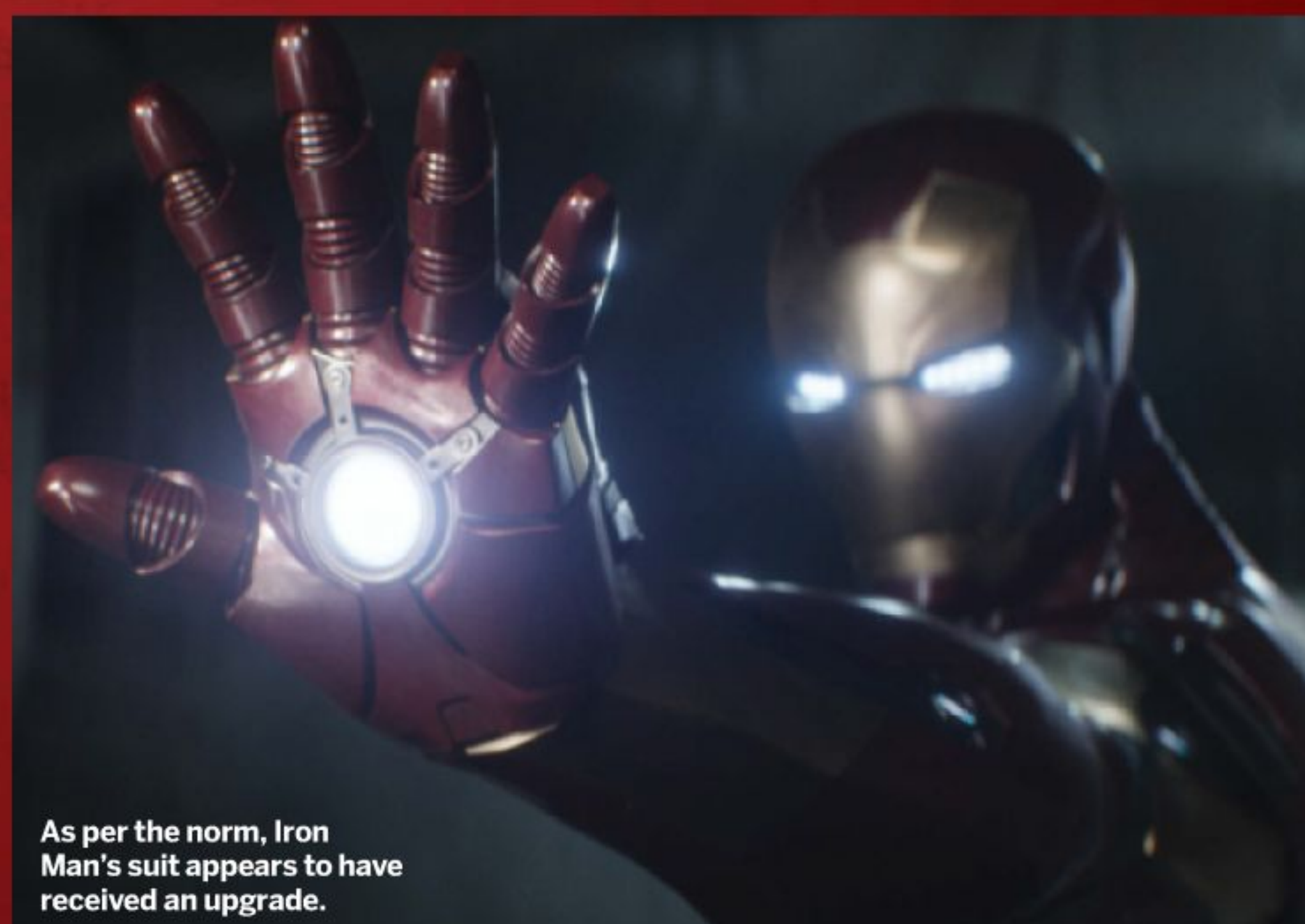
Even though the source material was written ten years ago, a lot of the themes of the film – government corruption, security, exploitation, police brutality – seem to mirror the political state of the world today.

"Unfortunately, reality seems to be becoming even more bizarre than comics at the moment, but we always wanted the movie to be about more than just two superheroes hitting each other," says Markus. "That's fun and hugely entertaining, but it stems from wanting them both to have a realistic and arguable position. It does basically come down to freedom versus security, this argument we've been having since 9/11: what are you going to sacrifice in order to ensure that something terrible doesn't happen?"

"It's not an answerable question, and it isn't in the movie either, because yes, nobody wants anything to blow up, and nobody wants terrible things to happen, but if you take away everything that's good about your life in order to prevent that, you've got nothing to



For Tony, the dispute later becomes far more personal.



As per the norm, Iron Man's suit appears to have received an upgrade.

ZEMO 101

WHO EXACTLY IS BARON ZEMO?

So who is he?

Well, in the comics he's basically a superhuman Nazi that clashed with Cap during World War II almost as much as Red Skull and Hitler did. He's all about helping the Master Race. He also ages really slowly, which is why he's lived this long after the war.



Wait, isn't he the guy who built a giant death ray cannon that later killed him?

That's Baron Heinrich Zemo. This is Baron *Helmut* Zemo.

There are two Baron Zemos? Yeah.

Are they related? Zemo isn't exactly a common surname.

As a matter of fact, they are related. In the comics, anyway. Heinrich is Helmut's father. They're actually from a long line of Baron Zemos. And they're a bitch to research, I can tell you.

But this one's being played by Daniel Bruhl, right?

He sure is.

Good. I like him. Same.

So how does he fit into *Captain America: Civil War*?

Obviously a lot about his character will be a secret until the film comes out, but according to Elizabeth Olsen (aka Scarlet Witch) he's playing the main villain.

Is he going to be the same as he is in the comics?

It sounds like this is an updated version. Joe Russo has previously said he that Bruhl isn't going to be donning Zemo's iconic helmet, which is a shame. But maybe that means his face will get melted off in *Civil War*.

COVER FEATURE

Captain America: Civil War

the shield,” says Markus. “Imagery wise, I would say... it’s difficult, because some of the most memorable things there are the massive amounts of heroes, and we have a lot, but we don’t have that many. But it was definitely the feeling we were going for with the big fights, so-called splash panel, where suddenly you’re given the entire box of candy all at once.”

Though the film isn’t on the same scale as the comic story in terms of the number of superheroes being thrown into the fight, it’s still bringing in more than we’re used to. One of those is, of course, Black Panther (Chadwick Boseman), a character we’ve never seen in a live-action film before. But how close will the screen version be to his comic origins? “We don’t go into a great deal of what is powering him,” says Markus. “Obviously he’s got his own movie coming, so we’re letting the [audience] view him as the people in the movie get to view him, which is, ‘Who the hell is this guy?’ He’s a third party who’s come in – what are his powers, where’s he come from, what’s

MARK MILLAR #TeamDeadpool

“In terms of pure fun, it’s going to be hard to beat. I love that it cost a fifth of everything else and is now one of the most successful superhero movies ever made.”

he doing? We’ll learn some of that, but a lot of it is left open-ended so that you can go to his own movie, coming to a theatre near you! But he’s pretty darn close to the comics books!”

Civil War’s solo-movie predecessor, *The Winter Soldier*, changed the status quo of the MCU by being bigger and more devastating than any Marvel solo movie we’d had before it. Will *Civil War* have a similar effect? “Yes, if not more. There is no solid ground at the end of this movie, I would say. It is a complete shift of the power dynamic, so who comes out on top and who is prepared for the next big horrible thing that is going to happen to the world is not clear. *Infinity War* is coming, [and] it’s a great place to lead from.”



Agent 13 (Emily VanCamp) and Natasha (Scarlett Johansson) end up on opposing sides.



Frank Grillo goes full Crossbones in his reprised role.

Whatever the outcome, nothing will be the same for the MCU.



THE END

FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD AVENGER

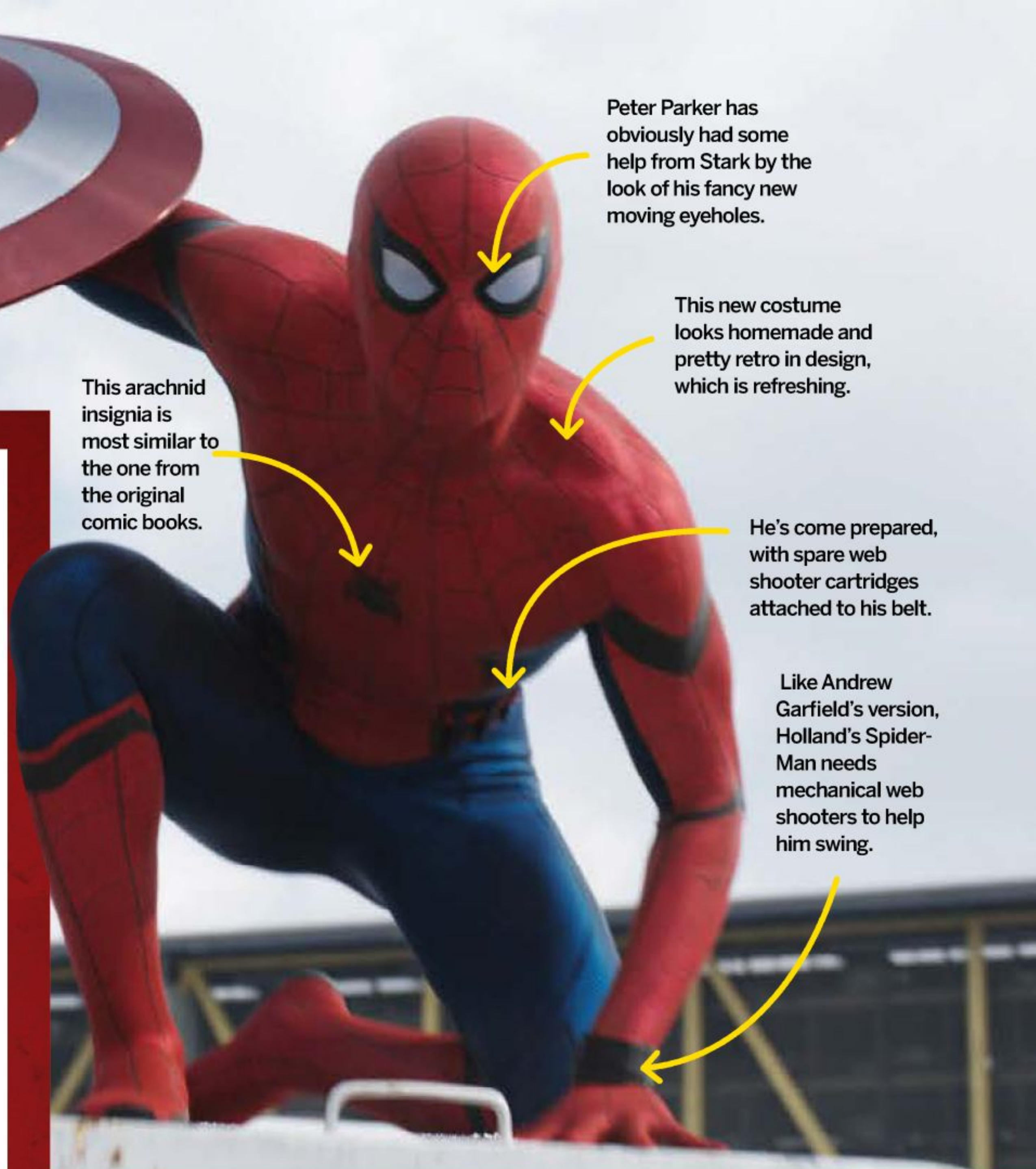
EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE NEW SPIDER-MAN

Captain America: Civil War might mark the first time Spider-Man has been inducted into the Marvel Cinematic Universe, but it's not the first time he's rendezvoused with the Avengers.

He was first invited to join way back in the 1960s in *Spider-Man Annual* #3, before finally becoming a member in *Avengers* #329 in February 1991, in which he joined as a reserve to the team. He was 27. Since then, he's been petering in and out of their ranks, having first become a full-time member in *New Avengers* #1. Really, Spider-Man could have joined the movie team in 2012's *Avengers Assemble* if it hadn't been for Sony, who had been

keeping a tight hold on the film rights until last year.

"He is, as he sounds in the trailer, a young guy, and he is very fresh to the superhero scene, which makes it a ton of fun to bring him into this bunch of pretty grizzled people, now," says Markus on Tom Holland's incarnation of Spidey. "They're pretty jaded, except for maybe Ant-Man, and to bring in this kid, who is still so excited about being a superhero as opposed to laden down with burdens. [That] is what this whole movie is about: burdens of this power, it's the perfect time to bring in this counter-theme of the genuine childish excitement of superheroism – and Tom is great!"



Peter Parker has obviously had some help from Stark by the look of his fancy new moving eyeholes.

This new costume looks homemade and pretty retro in design, which is refreshing.

This arachnid insignia is most similar to the one from the original comic books.

He's come prepared, with spare web shooter cartridges attached to his belt.

Like Andrew Garfield's version, Holland's Spider-Man needs mechanical web shooters to help him swing.



Of everyone, Natasha is perhaps the most conflicted.



Iron Man's side line up for the big fight.

protect anymore. We didn't set out to make Cap and Tony symbols for today's politics, but it's hard to avoid. We don't have anybody as cartoonish as Donald Trump in the movie!"

With the MCU 12 films down, how is *Civil War* going to stand out? "In a way, this is the movie that takes the clearest-eyed look at the consequences of what's been going on in the MCU in terms of what does it really mean to have this ever increasing number of more-than-human people walking around," Markus reveals. "It's also in some ways extreme wish fulfilment for the little kid in all of us who wanted to see which action figure would win if they fought together."

"This kind of movie had to happen. If we just kept making ra-ra heroic movies one after the other, it would be what everyone who doesn't actually watch these movies accuses them of being: cookie-cutter sequels which are all exactly the same. But I think the MCU has been very smart about evolving, and viewing the ramifications of one movie and letting that trickle down to the next movie."

"*Civil War* has proved that it is a functioning universe, and not a sequel machine. This is the organic evolution of where all these guys are coming. In some ways it's not where you thought they would have gone, because Tony

JENNY AGUTTER #TeamOnTheFence

"Captain America and Iron Man have always been at odds. But then, they are not the only two superheroes to have differences."

I have not studied recent developments but time moves on, what Captain America stood for was excellent, but perhaps his ideals are not relevant to the world he has woken up to. I am not sure though that I would side with Iron Man he is so unpredictable – aren't they all? I am going to watch carefully to see what happens and what might be revealed."

told the government to go to hell in *Iron Man*, and Cap would appear to be the government's creation, and they've flipped positions. Cap's not as much of an order taker as he would seem to be, but the events of the movie that have come between have pushed them in opposite directions. That wasn't 100 per cent intentional; that's just the evolution of storytelling. It's extremely satisfying that it's worked out in such a neat way to get us here."

Captain America: Civil War is out in the UK on 29 April.

#1 THE ADVENTURES OF **CLICHE-MAN**

WRITTEN BY **PALMER
NEAL**
DESIGN BY **COUSENS
FAINT**

FROM
DECEASED
PARENTS TO
ANGRY COPS
AND THE
NAZIS, WE
LOVE A GOOD
SUPERHERO
MOVIE
TROPE...

SUE 1



A DARK ALLEY

DEAD PARENTS AND A TRAUMATIC CHILDHOOD

Applicable to: *Batman, Spider-Man, Magneto, Black Widow*

Finding something to avenge can be a pain in your neck. But when your parents have been dead for most of your life, or if your upbringing sucked, motivating your reign of justice suddenly becomes much easier.



A SECRET LAB

THE FAILED SCIENCE EXPERIMENT

Applicable to: *Hulk, Captain America, almost all the Spider-Man villains, the Fantastic Four, Deadpool*
Nothing good ever came from defying nature and meddling in illegal scientific experiments. Cell structures get altered, people get hurt, and before you know it you have humanoid lizard creatures and goblin men roaming the city. Occasionally you'll produce a superhero, but is it really worth the risk?



A CITY TOWER

THE KIDNAPPED LOVE INTEREST

Applicable to: *Spider-Man/MJ, Superman/Lois Lane, Iron Man/Pepper Potts*
One downside to dating a superhero is you're going to get kidnapped at one point – or in the case of Mary Jane Watson in Sam Raimi's *Spider-Man* trilogy, many. Sometimes you survive, sometimes you don't. Just wait to get rescued or murdered.



THE HERO LAIR

THE SUPERHERO COSTUME MAKEOVER MONTAGE

Applicable to: Spider-Man, Deadpool, Kick-Ass, Iron Man

The powers have revealed themselves, our hero has gained 20 pounds in muscle mass, and realised they can use their new abilities to help the city and avenge the death of their parents.

That can only mean one thing: it's time for a makeover montage! Cue the music in three.

CLICHE-O-METER
8
CLICHE-O-METER



A SUMMER'S DAY

"WE USED TO BE FRIENDS!"

Applicable to: Wolverine/Sabretooth, Professor X/Magneto, Thor/Loki, Captain America/Bucky Barnes, Spider-Man/New Goblin, Superman/Lex Luthor

Summers spent with your best friend: riding bikes through the park, making daisy chains and talking about girls. But then you slowly stop taking calls until you lose touch all together. It all goes to shit when one of you gets superpowers, and the other tries to take over the world.

CLICHE-O-METER
5
CLICHE-O-METER



VILLAIN'S LAIR

"We're not so different, you and I..."

Applicable to: Iron Man vs most of the villains, Spider-Man vs Green Goblin, Batman vs everyone in Batman Returns, Magneto vs Sebastian Shaw

It's always the same: the villain and the hero have radically contrasting methods, opinions and personalities, but *they are so similar!* They both have dead parents, they both trusted their mentors before being viciously betrayed, and they both did it all for love. Or something. Cases may vary...

CLICHE-O-METER
10
CLICHE-O-METER



GOVERNMENT FORTRESS

THE HERO VERSUS THE SYSTEM

Applicable to: Captain America: The Winter Soldier, The Amazing Spider-Man, Avengers Assemble, Iron Man

We're always on the side of the hero, but the police, the military and the secret organisations often turn against them. Harsh words are exchanged, laws are broken, and then the hero is found guilty of high treason.

CLICHE-O-METER
6
CLICHE-O-METER



A CRUMBLLED CITYSCAPE

WHO WOULD WIN IN A FIGHT?

Applicable to: *Captain America: Civil War*, *Batman V Superman: Dawn Of Justice*
A battle of good versus evil is great, but a battle of hero versus hero has us swooning in the aisle. Team-ups are neat, but *who would win in a fight?*



A RETRO BATTLEFIELD

IT'S PROBABLY TO DO WITH THE NAZIS

Applicable to: *X-Men: First Class*, *Captain America: The First Avenger*, *The Rocketeer*, *Hellboy*
If something has gone wrong and you're stuck in the first half of the 20th Century (or part of your team is from it), it's almost always down to those bloody Nazis. If your story is more recent than that, it's often a Nazi fan group. Hitler may not be physically present for the proceedings, but he's there in spirit.



EVERYWHERE, FOREVER



THE GRATUITOUS STAN LEE CAMEO

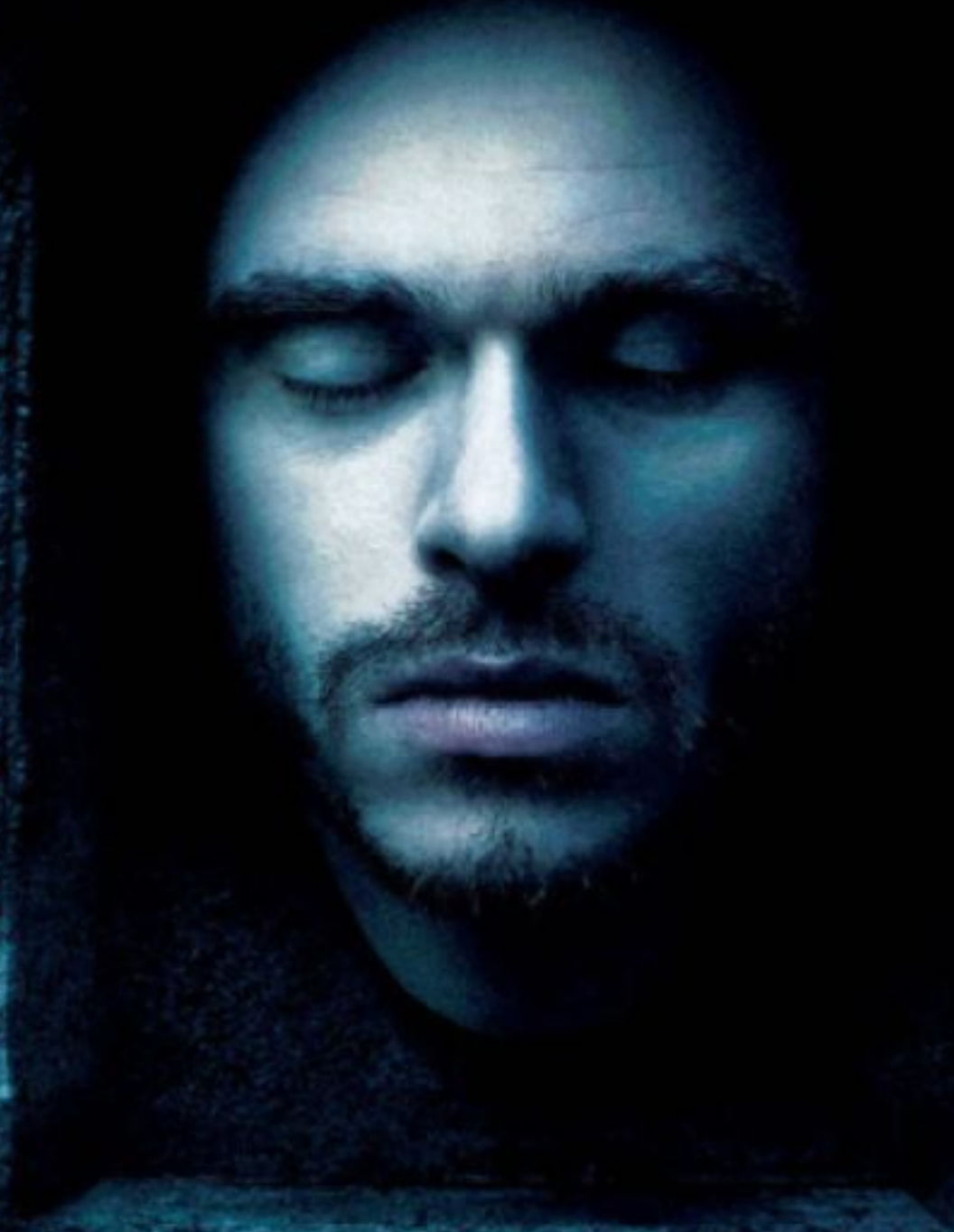
Applicable to: *The entire MCU*, *Deadpool*, *all the Spider-Mans*, *most of the X-Mens*, *The Trial Of The Incredible Hulk*, *Fantastic Four*
Ha! It was me, Stan Lee, all along! I signed up to appear in every Marvel movie as a child, and the contract is still legally binding all these 90 years later. If you don't want me in your movie you have to physically beat me away with a rolled-up newspaper.





MUST-SEE TV

Game Of Thrones





VALAR MORGHULIS

ALL BETS ARE OFF. GAME OF THRONES HAS CAUGHT UP WITH THE BOOKS, AND NO ONE IS SAFE. WE SPOKE TO THE CAST ABOUT COURTING CONTROVERSY AND WHAT'S TO COME IN SEASON SIX...

WORDS STEVE WRIGHT

LANNISTER, TARGARYEN, BARATHEON, STARK, TYRELL, THEY'RE ALL JUST SPOKES ON A WHEEL... I'M NOT GOING TO STOP THE WHEEL. I'M GOING TO BREAK THE WHEEL."

This pronouncement from Daenerys Targaryen (Emilia Clarke) was a bold one, but as we enter Season Six, we find the noble houses of Westeros doing just fine themselves in this regard. The Baratheon line is all but ended, with Robert and Renly dead, and Stannis's (Stephen Dillane) life in the balance after his encounter with the vengeful Brienne (Gwendoline Christie) following the destruction of his army. Jaime Lannister (Nikolaj Coster-Waldau) has witnessed his niece/daughter Myrcella's (Nell Tiger Free) demise, while Cersei (Lena Headey)'s rule of King's Landing ends in humiliation. And as for the Starks? Near as we can tell, none of them are having the best of times.

The thing is, we could always see it coming. Even though the TV series has progressively deviated more and more from the books, it has generally stayed true in the case of the major events. Ned Stark's execution, the Red Wedding, Joffrey's demise, the Viper and the Mountain, Jon Snow – the readers have always been one step ahead of the TV viewers. As we head into Season Six, however, that will no longer be the case; they will be just as in the dark as everyone else, their privileged position plummeting to the same depths. This applies to the cast as well, although when we speak to them, they don't seem remotely phased.

"I stopped using the books as source material a long time ago," says Alfie ➤



MUST-SEE TV

Game Of Thrones

➤ Allen, who plays the man/eunuch Theon Greyjoy/Reek (delete as appropriate). "I only really go on what happens in the script."

Iwan Rheon, who plays his chief tormentor, Ramsay Bolton, is slightly more forthcoming about any misgivings he may have about their futures: "There's always been uncertainty – every time I check the script it's like, 'I'm alright this year!'"

"Characters always died that were still around in the books, so it wasn't always a given that people would last or storylines would follow through," adds Michael McElhatton, aka Ramsay's father Roose, the Warden of the North in lieu of the Starks. "We've always worked off the scripts, really."

Even when not working scene-for-scene from the books, the show still found time to shock those who thought they knew it all. The rape of Sansa Stark (Sophie Turner) at the hands of Ramsay, all shot through Theon's horrified perspective, was arguably the most controversial moment in a show that was never in any danger of being short of them. For the first time since it began in 2011, *Game Of Thrones* found itself under fire. Writer Bryan Cogman recently came out to justify the storyline, and the cast are similarly staunch in their defence of it.

"It was a horrible, brutal scene, but it had to happen for the storyline and for the Boltons to continue their allegiance with the Starks," justifies McElhatton. "I don't think it was gratuitous or sexualised in any way, and I thought it was brilliantly handled by the directors, actors and writers."

"I think people forget that with the really controversial scenes of the show, David [Benioff] and Dan [Weiss] don't just write it like, 'Yeah, let's do that, that's perfect.' There are huge discussions that go into the decisions they've made for these hugely graphic scenes or upsetting scenes," says Maisie Williams, who plays Arya Stark. "They don't just write them because they want to kill these characters or put them in awful situations; they are in love with the show and have an emotional connection with the characters involved. I think people quite often dismiss that and say, 'Oh no, you didn't have to rape Sansa...' Everyone has the right to their own opinion, but I think sometimes people dismiss the struggle."

"And the implications of it," finishes Liam Cunningham, aka Stannis Baratheon's right-hand man Davos Seaworth. "One of the reasons they do it is... I use the example of if you took out the sex and violence. It's a grown-up show, and look at the other extreme – if we wanted to keep everybody happy, and we took all of that out, you would consider us to be patronising and condescending, and being a nanny. We put this stuff in because the drama and the characters, they're not black and white;

they're grey, your sympathies shift between them, and there's an expectation in the audience that pays attention to this. It is a medieval, fucked-up world, and it would be absolutely wrong to leave this stuff out.

"One of the reasons the violence is disgusting in our show is because violence is disgusting; it's not pretty, and it's never been pretty in the show. And there's an equal amount of stuff in there that the characters are using sex as a weapon to get what they want; not all the time, but it's method. If [Melisandre] takes her clothes off you're like, 'What's she fucking up to?' It's not for titillation; someone's going to fucking die! People are in fucking trouble if this woman takes her clothes off. Which is great, because it's a different way of doing things; it's a clever way of doing things."

HAVING MADE THEIR LEAP OF FAITH FROM THE WALLS OF WINTERFELL IN THE SEASON FIVE FINALE, THE FIRST TRAILER FOR SEASON SIX INDICATES THAT THEON AND

Sansa survived their tumble – although what takes place after that is anyone's guess. While you may not like what has happened to her character, there can be no doubting the strength of Sophie Turner's performances, overlooked amid the furore. Indeed, Hollywood has taken heed, with her first big-screen appearance shortly to follow in *X-Men: Apocalypse* as the young Jean Grey. For Allen, her success is well deserved.

"She's such a joy to be around. She goes from joking around, then Action – she's all serious. It catches you off guard." With regards the rape scene, he is similarly fulsome in his praise. "I thought Sophie dealt with everything that came with that situation in character and also as a woman outside of the show absolutely fantastically."

But for all the accusations levelled at the show for its treatment of its female characters, the men don't have it easy either. Chief among them is Theon, who has gone from a cocksure, self-entitled, bed-hopping heir to a shuffling, broken shell of his former self. For the man who portrays him, it's a transformation that he's on board with.

"It was great having the opportunity to have my willy chopped off!" he laughs. "No really, it was completely appropriate to the character. He had nothing in that world. The only place of authority he had was in the bedroom, and so to have that taken away from him was completely appropriate and relevant to the character."

Elsewhere, there is the question of Stannis. So crushingly defeated by the Boltons' army, it's not only his life that's in question, but also the futures of his former acolytes Davos (Liam Cunningham) and Melisandre (Carice van Houten) at the Wall, the former ordered back by his lord, and the



Samwell (John Bradley) has sailed off to Oldtown with Gilly (Hannah Murray).



Ramsay (Iwan Rheon) is left dealing with the fallout of the escape of Sansa (Sophie Turner) and Theon (Alfie Allen).



Missandei (Nathalie Emmanuel) is left assisting Tyrion (Peter Dinklage).



GAME OF THRONES PICK YOUR OWN RULER

"Daenerys Targaryen... she's got some good morals, but she doesn't seem to me to know how to rule. Everyone just tells her what to do. Whatever, she's got dragons!" **Iwan Rheon**



GAME OF
THRONES
PICK YOUR OWN RULER
“I would say Yara Greyjoy, I think she would be a great queen. And I think little Bran [Stark] might have a good chance of doing that.” **Alfie Allen**

latter having fled their with metaphorical tale between her legs after her suggested sacrifice of Stannis’s daughter Shireen failed to yield him victory. Both characters face uncertain futures, which van Houten acknowledges. “The ground has been taken from underneath them in different ways, and our reasons to live almost have gone, so we’re in the same boat, which is interesting. We just handle it a little bit differently.”

Someone else whose life is changing is Arya Stark. Having gone against the wishes of the Faceless Men in brutally murdering the sadistic Kingsguard Meryn Trant, she finds herself blinded, her obsession with revenge finally having come back to haunt her. According to Williams, she won’t fare much better in the upcoming episodes.

“Going into Season Six, she gets broken down totally... we see her at the lowest point that we’ve ever seen her. This time, it’s nothing to do with a family member being killed or something that’s happened to her emotionally. It’s purely about herself, and I love that side of it. In this new series, we definitely see a little crack in her, and she’s not got the upper hand. There’s a moment where you really question whether she’s going to get back up and keep fighting.”

Arya isn’t the only character who faces an uncertain future. In King’s Landing, Margaery (Natalie Dormer) is locked in a cell, and Cersei remains at the mercy of the High Sparrow (Jonathan Pryce). Amid all this sits Tommen on the throne, a relative innocent amid a nest of vipers. “I love Tommen, but everyone’s kind of frustrated for him I think,” says actor Dean-Charles Chapman. “His wife’s ➤

“EVERYBODY’S ON THIS WEIRD JOURNEY... NO ONE KNOWS WHERE THE DESTINATION IS GOING TO BE”
ALFIE ALLEN



MUST-SEE TV

Game Of Thrones

➤ in prison, his mum's going through all this stuff, and everyone just wants him to do something. He's the only one really that can do something. He's got a good heart, but he just hasn't got the confidence. Tommen's different from everyone else; he just wants peace, unfortunately."

FAT CHANCE OF THAT. WATCH THE PILOT EPISODE, AND COUNT THE FACES WHO ARE STILL AROUND. WHILE GAME OF THRONES ISN'T AS UNSAFE FOR ITS MAIN CHARACTERS

as, say, *The Walking Dead*, it still revels in pulling the rug from under our feet, as we discovered with the climatic 'death' of Jon Snow at the hands of his own men. For John Bradley, who has spent much of his time on the show alongside Kit Harington as Samwell Tarly, it gives him a chance to reminisce.

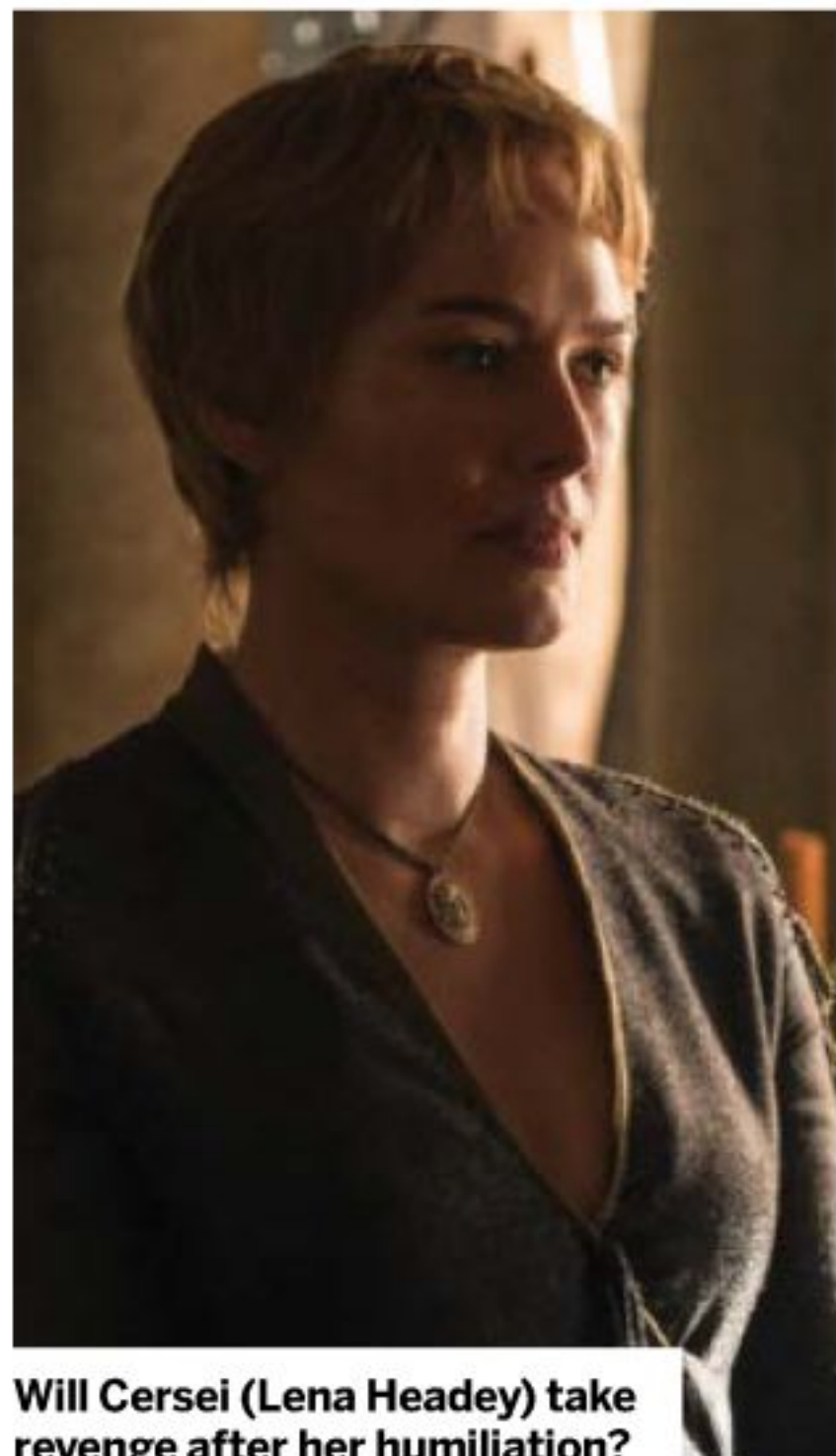
"It's hard not to let your personal real-life emotions get into it. You think, 'Oh, it's terrible that Jon Snow's not going to be in it,' but it's also more terrible to me that Kit's not going to be on set every day. Not that I've been really acting with him anyway, but that presence will be missing. People from Season One are quite thin on the ground now, and all the old compadres are all being taken out, and he's been added to that list of Richard [Madden, Robb Stark], Michelle [Fairley, Catelyn Stark], Oona Chaplin [Lady Talisa], all these people – he's just another name on that list of people we're going to miss. So Jon Snow dying – boo hoo, get over it. My professional relationship with this guy, who I love very much, the first person I ever acted with professionally, I'm probably not going to do that again. So it's hard to stop those real things creeping into it."

But just as the characters are dropping like flies, new ones are rising to take their place. Season Six will see the first appearance of Euron Greyjoy (Pilou Asbaek), uncle of Theon and, if the books are anything to go by, a not particularly nice individual. Then we have the entire Tarly clan, new casting for the Three-Eyed Raven in the form of Max von Sydow, Ian McShane in an unspecified role, and Sebastian Croft as the young Eddard Stark, indicating that we'll see even more Cersei and Maggy the Frog-esque flashback sequences. Expanding an already sprawling show may seem like defeating the object, but pushing the envelope is something that *Game Of Thrones* is no stranger to – as exemplified by this little anecdote from Cunningham.

"There's a book that's been made for all the behind-the-scenes people. There's no actors in it; it's all the crew and the people who worked on it. They're handing out 1,400 copies of it, so that's how many people



Season Six will see the return of Yara Greyjoy (Gemma Whelan).



Will Cersei (Lena Headey) take revenge after her humiliation?

are involved in it. Apart from extraordinary people like Bertie Caulfield and Chris Newman, who are basically the generals running this show, they are approached by David and Dan and HBO and go, 'That's what we want to do this year.' They hand it over going, 'We're just waiting for Bertie and Chris to go, 'Are you out of your fucking mind?' Instead they look at it – they're both very quiet individuals – and go, 'I think we can do this', and they go off, and David and Dan go, 'I don't know how they fucking do this!' The amount of work involved with two and regularly three units running, and sometimes four, to have that. It's a military campaign to get this done."

Even so, all things must come to an end, and *Game Of Thrones* is no exception. Cunningham admits that "it's not going to go on much longer," a point that Williams elaborates on: "I think from the start they've always known that there's going to be an end. David and Dan have always set out, and at the beginning we never let ourselves get too excited if it would get picked up, and then it started to get really successful. We started to believe we could tell this whole story, but they always set out knowing where the end was, and I liked that. I think that people need to know when to stop. I think sometimes people do things to death."

Williams is far from ungrateful, recognising the impact the show has had on her career. "It wasn't an overnight thing for me, which would have been much more difficult to deal with. There [are] moments where you stop and think, 'My life has changed forever,' it wasn't [an] overnight thing. I'm really grateful to be able to get used to fame nice and slowly, and [it all] comes on my own terms. As an actor growing up on this show, I now have a body of work that shows a lot of different sides to my acting abilities. [Arya]s been through so much that I can now have this one series to be like, 'What sort of character are you looking for? Arya Season One or...'"

Still, there's no need to panic: *Game Of Thrones* is still alive, and has plenty more stories left to tell. The destination may be in question, but one thing's for sure: getting there is going to be a blast. "Everybody's on this weird journey, and then all of us are heading off on the upcoming Season Six on this journey, leaving a port that nobody knows where the arrival's going to be," finishes Cunningham. "It's nice that that's happening close to the end of the story, that we're sailing into uncharted territory." ☞

Game Of Thrones: Season Six will air on Sky Atlantic from 25 April.



GAME OF THRONES
PICK YOUR OWN RULER

"Jaime Lannister. We thought he was not a nice person, but as the series progresses, you learn to love him and see the other side of him." **Dean-Charles Chapman**

GOING INTO SEASON SIX, ARYA GETS BROKEN DOWN COMPLETELY
MAISIE WILLIAMS



GAME OF
THRONES
PICK YOUR OWN RULER

"I'd like to see Jon Snow; I think Jon Snow would be good, or Arya."

Michael McElhatton

GAME OF THRONES

rhulis



THE HIGH SPARROW SEES IT ALL

Game Of Thrones' worst sorts are in the dock

"I am here to pass judgement on those who have wronged the Realm. All are equal in the eyes of the Seven, regardless of their House, rank or allegiance..."



JOFFREY BARATHEON

Crimes

1. Starting a continent-spanning war
2. Killing the show's best character
3. Being utterly hateful

Verdict

"A bastard born of incest, possessing nothing but arrogance and contempt for the woes of the small folk. That said, you share the Faith Militant's thoughts regarding sexual deviants, so I'll let you off with a walk of shame."



RAMSAY BOLTON

Crimes

1. Destroying Winterfell
2. Indulging in mass flaying
3. Treating prisoners poorly

Verdict

"Rarely has this court heard of such a multitude of atrocities. If he doesn't stop sending back my followers minus their skins then I'll have to really come down hard on him."



GREGOR CLEGANE

Crimes

1. Killing many in battle
2. Murdering children
3. Butchering a fan favourite

Verdict

"Your conduct during the trial by combat of Tyrion Lannister was so sickening that I couldn't watch. Literally; it was revolting. You deserve nothing but a slow, painful demise – which is probably just well. That and the cleaning bill for scraping Martell brain from the stone slabs."



PETYR Baelish

Crimes

1. Playing everyone against each other
2. Abandoning Sansa
3. Defenestrating his former wife

Verdict

"You are corruption personified. I have already closed your brothels, and would love nothing dearer than to put you away for... wait, is that incriminating evidence against Cersei Lannister? Never mind..."

GAME OF THRONES UNCOVERED

THE ESSENTIAL FACTS AND FIGURES FROM WESTEROS AND BEYOND...

WORDS STEVE WRIGHT

WORLD OF ICE AND FIRE

THE FILMING LOCATIONS OF GAME OF THRONES LAID BARE

1 Calgary, Canada

Some direwolf scenes

2 Iceland

Beyond the Wall

3 Los Angeles, USA

Bear Pit

4 Dubrovnik, Croatia

King's Landing, Qarth



5 Malta

Pentos, King's Landing

6 Spain

Volantis, Vaes Dothrak, Meereen, Tower of Joy, Oldtown, Braavos

7 Morocco

Slaver's Bay, Astapor, Yunkai

8 Northern Ireland

Castle Black, Moat Cailin, Harrenhal, Dreadfort, Riverrun, Craster's Keep, Dragonstone

HANG ON, DON'T I KNOW YOU?

In addition to currently playing Tommen Baratheon, Dean-Charles Chapman also briefly starred as the ill-fated Martyn Lannister in Season Three.



Tommen Baratheon

(Callum Wharry, Dean-Charles Chapman)



Myrcella Baratheon

(Aimee Richardson, Nell Tiger Free)



Gregor Clegane

(Conan Stevens, Ian Whyte, Hafþór Júlíus Björnsson)



Beric Dondarrion

(David Michael Scott, Richard Dormer)



Three-Eyed Raven

(Struan Rodger, Max von Sydow)



Daario Naharis

(Ed Skrein, Michiel Huisman)



Rickard Karstark

(Steven Blount, John Stahl)

DEADLIEST WARRIORS

WHO HAS THE HIGHEST BODY COUNT?

Jon Snow	19
Daario Naharis	19
The Hound	18
Tormund Giantsbane	15
Barristan Selmy	14
Ygritte	14
Grey Worm	13
Jorah Mormont	11
Bronn	10
Ramsay Bolton	9
Brienne of Tarth	8
Arya Stark	6

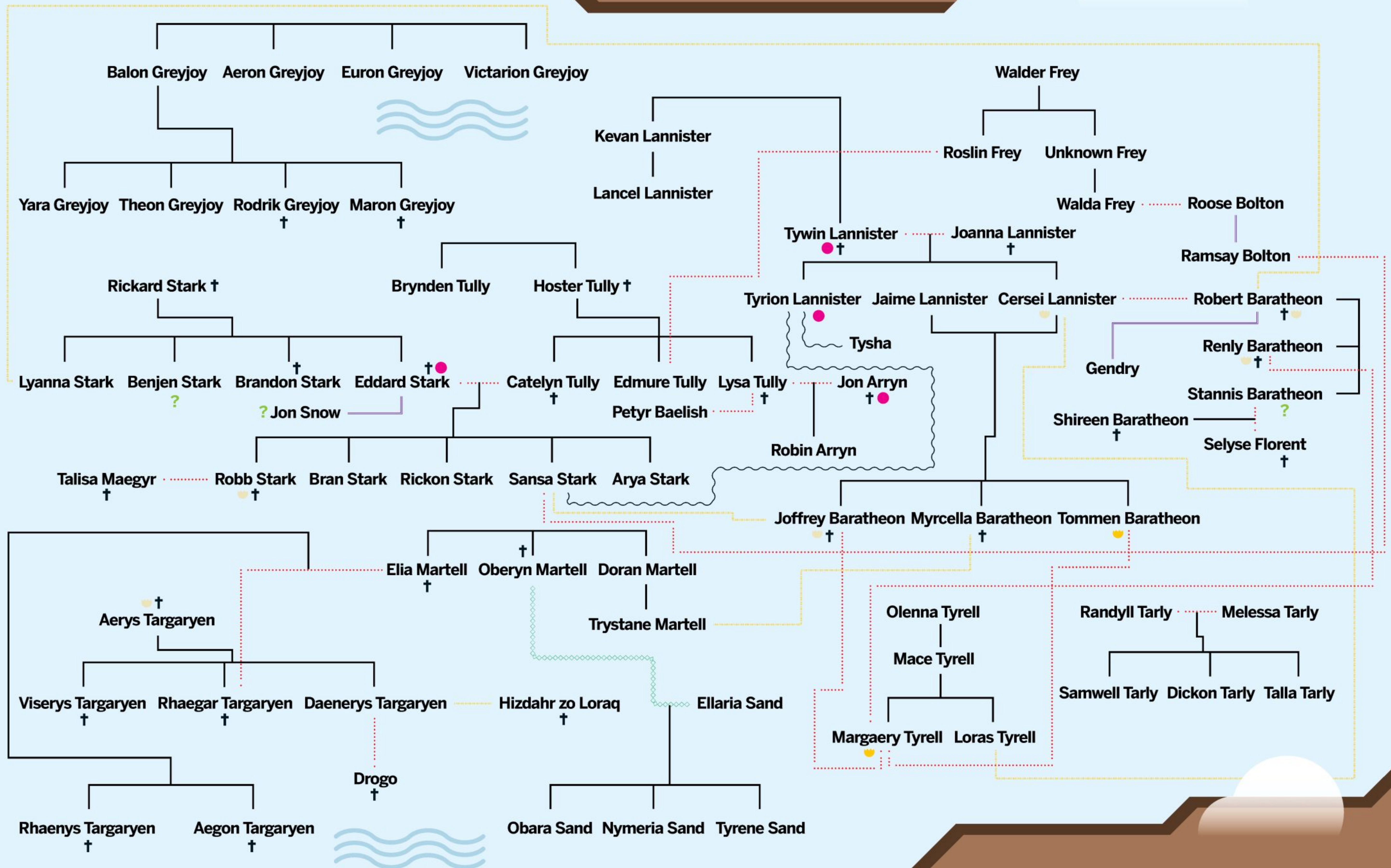
BEFORE & AFTER

THE CHANGING FACES OF THE SHOW'S CHARACTERS

TREE OF WOE

KEY

- Married
- Marriage Annulled
- Engaged
- † † † Dead
- ☀ King/Queen
- Partners
- Bastards
- Hand Of King
- ?? ? Status Unknown



INGLORIOUS BASTARD

IN A SHOW FULL OF
ICONIC VILLAINS,
RAMSAY BOLTON
STANDS OUT AS
ONE OF THE MOST
MEMORABLE. WE
SPOKE TO IWAN
RHEON ABOUT
BEING GAME OF
THRONES' NEW
BÊTE NOIRE...

WORDS STEVE WRIGHT

HAVING FIRST SHOWN UP AS THEON'S MYSTERIOUS 'RESCUER' TURNED CAPTOR IN SEASON THREE, IWAN RHEON'S RAMSAY BOLTON (NÉE SNOW) HAS QUICKLY

become one of the show's foremost scene stealers thanks to his gleeful sadism and unpredictable nature. Ahead of Season Six, we tracked him down to the Dreadfort to talk dungeons, dragons and, erm, Liam Gallagher.

This is your fourth season playing Ramsay Bolton, how have you found the experience so far?

It's been wonderful, it's such an amazing thing to be a part of. It's one of those that when I'm old and grey, I'll be able to look back on. To have been a part of something really special, it's never really happened before. It's been wonderful.

How has the experience of playing Ramsay differed from other roles?

Practically, it's a very different way of filming because of the sheer scale of it. It can be quite sporadic, and you can be there for a few weeks or a day. It's sometimes quite difficult to get into it, because every day feels like the first day. Obviously Ramsay's a complete and utter psychopath, so he's an interesting role to play. There's been some moments and scenes that I dreaded; the things he does are horrific, so it can be quite difficult to get your head round.

What kind of place is Ramsay in as Season Six starts?

There's a huge problem in the fact that Sansa has escaped. That massively weakens Ramsay's position in the North, because joining House Stark and Bolton would secure the North. The Boltons aren't the most popular family, while the Starks are. The Boltons would have a

strong hold on the North, so losing her means that he can't produce an heir, which means that Walda's [Roose's wife] baby is potentially a threat to him as the true heir. That's kind of where he is – he's a bit fucked off to be honest! [laughs]

And what are his thoughts on Theon's escape?

It's more of a day-to-day practical thing: bringing him his food and getting him dressed; I imagine that he misses Theon. It's a bit of a personal blow, but in terms of the grand scheme and the greater game, it's not a huge blow to him. Sansa's the main concern.

His father, Roose, seems to be the only character he's subservient to. Will this be changing at any point?

I think he's very loyal. It's one of the rare redeeming qualities of the character. It's kind of like everyone: you really want your father's appreciation and all that, and you want your father to love you – it's what he's looking for. He's very loyal to House Bolton, and Ramsay's a very handy person to have around. Although he's a bit wild, he does come up with some great ideas, and he's brave. So something major would have to happen to make him turn against his father.

Most of his scenes are pretty dark. Is there a lot of gallows humour on set?

Yeah, it's so intense, and you get the sense of importance and the scale of it when you're on set, so you've got to be on top form, but in between takes yeah, you've got to have a laugh. Michael McElhatton's good fun, and so's Alfie [Allen] and Sophie [Turner], so we have a great laugh in Season Five. Being such an arsehole, you've got to!

Tying into that, what have been your most fun scenes to film?

I really enjoyed the shaving scene in Season Four – that was a wonderfully written scene, I really enjoyed shooting that. Every season I get these really amazing scenes. You read the script and you're like, "Wow, thank you so much!" You get at least one belter every year. So there's a lot more to come this season!

Game Of Thrones has memorable villains, but Ramsay stands out. What's the key to a good villain?

I guess the key to Ramsay is joy: he enjoys living and doing the things he's doing. He's not heavy in himself; he's very extroverted, and does what he thinks he fancies doing. That's the key to him: the sheer joy he has in torturing innocent people – which is nice!

Are there any characters that you are inspired by when playing him?

There are three main factors me: there's the Joker from *Batman*, Heath Ledger, how kind of unpredictable he is, that strange, psychotic energy. Dennis the Menace was a major factor, and Liam Gallagher – those are my three! Mostly for the walk, Liam Gallagher.

What can we expect to see in Season Six of Game Of Thrones?

The world keeps opening up, and you get to see different parts of it and new characters come in. It's bigger than ever before. It's going to be pretty epic. The season starts with a bit of a bang; it really hits the ground running. Also we're starting to see these signs that it's coming to some kind of grand conclusion, which is very exciting, and by the end of Season Six you'll see where it's going. ☞

THE WIT AND WRATH OF RAMSAY BOLTON

THE WORDS THAT PROVE YOU DON'T WANT TO MESS WITH HIM...

"If you think this has a happy ending, you haven't been paying attention"

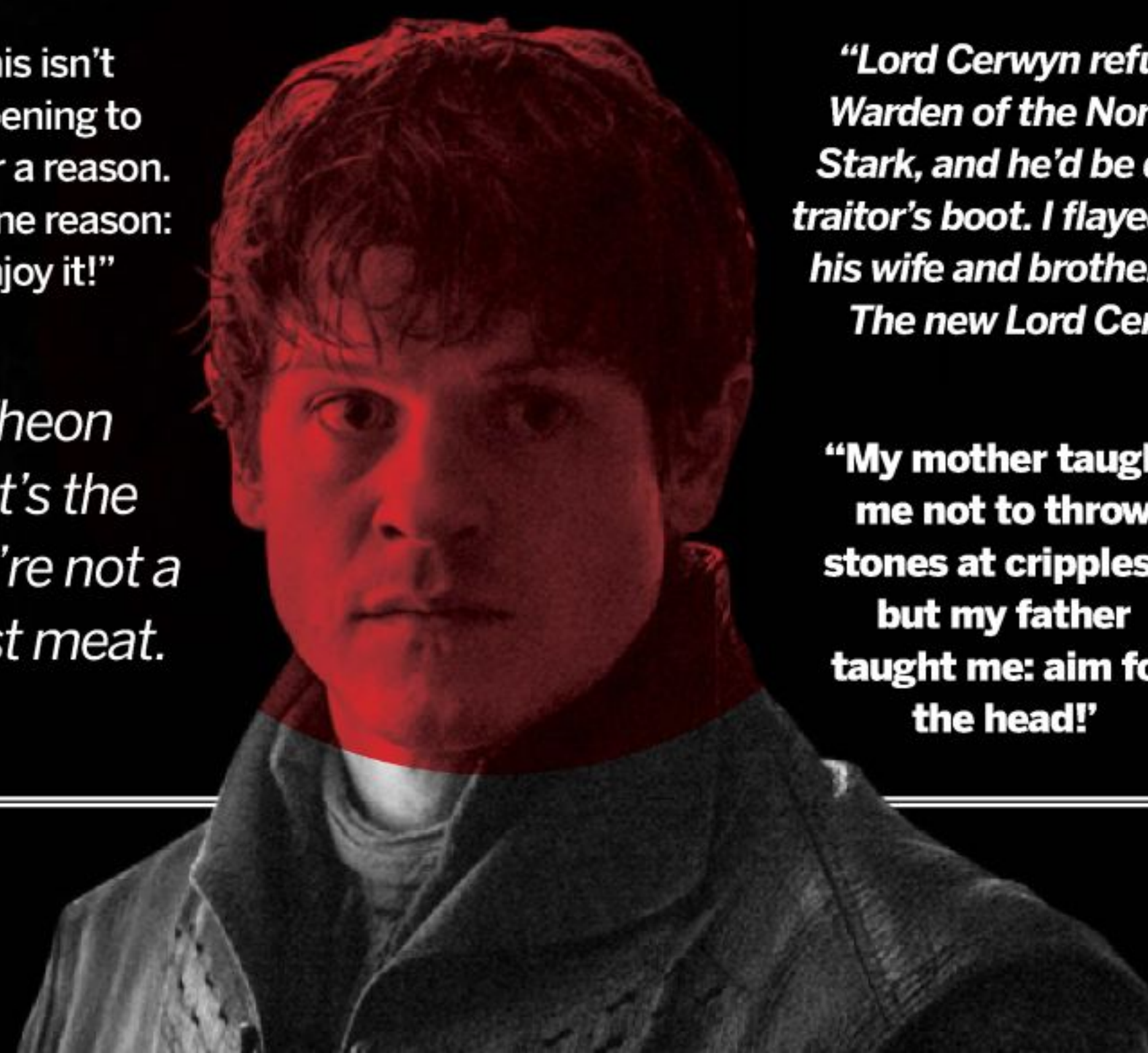
"You don't look like Theon Greyjoy anymore. That's the name for a lord, but you're not a lord, are you? You're just meat. Stinking meat"

"This isn't happening to you for a reason. Well, one reason: I enjoy it!"

"Lord Cerwyn refused to pay. Said the Warden of the North would always be a Stark, and he'd be damned if he kissed a traitor's boot. I flayed him living, along with his wife and brother. Made his son watch. The new Lord Cerwyn paid his taxes"

"My mother taught me not to throw stones at cripples... but my father taught me: aim for the head!"

"Jealousy bores me. You remember what happens to people who bore me"



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PUNK SHOCK

JEREMY SAULNIER ON CRAFTING A PUNK-ROCK SIEGE HORROR WITH GREEN ROOM

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL

PUNK BAND THE AIN'T RIGHTS ARE IN A TOUGH SPOT. THEY DON'T EVEN HAVE CASH FOR GAS, LET ALONE FOOD, SO WHEN THEY'RE OFFERED A POTENTIALLY

lucrative gig playing a right-wing bar deep in the forests of Portland, they don't really have a choice. That tough spot is about get tougher, however, as the discovery of a just-murdered body leads to the band barricading themselves in the green room, while the neo-Nazis outside get ready to do whatever it takes to get in. It will leave you breathless.

SETTING THE STAGE

Saulnier came to global attention two years ago for *Blue Ruin*, in which a troubled man tries to take revenge on the man who killed his parents, with terrible results. *Green Room* is the culmination of a much older concept. "It's an idea that actually pre-dated *Blue Ruin*, so I had to get it out of my system," he tells us. "Spending time with bands and in bands, I loved the environment and thought it was under-utilised. It seemed like a really cool setting for a genre flick. The punk hardcore aesthetic is just really cinematic, and I just thought, 'How cool would it be for a show to go horribly wrong?'"

Sadly, far-right violence fits too neatly into this setting. "Punk and hardcore is very anti-establishment, and that can break right and left," he explains. "The scene is very progressive and tight-knit. But there's this fringe element, the hate-mongers. It does attract a certain amount of aggression, violence and physicality. I think it's just an offshoot where that aggression is perverted and politicised in a way that's contrary to the intent of the movement."

BAD TIMES AHEAD

Those who saw *Blue Ruin* will tell you that violence in a Saulnier movie isn't clean. "In my view, it's more responsible to make violence brutal and emotionally and narratively impactful, and not just a throwaway textural element of the movie," he explains. "It has to drive the narrative and enhance the experience. The choreography associated with the violence is sloppy, haphazard and immediate. I use it as a tool, with a few exceptions! I'm a genre film fan, so there are times when I will indulge in a bad-ass action sequence for the sake of a bad-ass action sequence, as long as I

don't veer too far off course. *Green Room* is certainly a brutal, intense experience, and it's absolutely not supposed to celebrate violence, but I think it's a little more firmly in the exploitation genre film category, and unabashedly so."

The result certainly makes an impact, as shotgun blasts tear off faces, knives make terrible messes of limbs and bones don't break cleanly.

GETTING THE BAND TOGETHER

Although the cast of *Green Room* is higher profile than *Blue Ruin*'s, Saulnier tells us that he was determined to resist any pressure to cast stars. "It's just so important to me to have things grounded emotionally, and I love seeing real people on screen – it's that simple," he enthuses.

"Performance is a huge part of that. These feel like people I knew growing up. It's about being indifferent to fame or assessed foreign sales value, whatever the fuck the industry wants to assign people. It's just: do you have the chops? If you're dedicated to assembling a team that is invested in telling a story from their craft point of view, then you're safe."

The group is superb, with Anton Yelchin (*Star Trek*) leading the Ain't Rights, with Alia Shawkat (*Arrested Development*), Joe Cole (*Peaky Blinders*) and Callum Turner (*Glue*), with Imogen Poots (*Filth*) as the friend of the murder victim trapped with them. "We're not casting a bunch of action heroes," Saulnier tells us. "So you have actors who are rarely allowed the opportunity to star in action movies, and just embrace that and love to get their hands dirty. Imogen Poots rarely gets the chance to go full feral and wield a shotgun and just go bananas!"

NAZI PUNKS F OFF

On the other side of the door is a group of heavily armed and highly motivated skinhead fascists, led by the great Patrick Stewart as Darcy. The venerable *X-Men* star gives a softly spoken, sinister turn as the bar owner, and will do what it takes to prevent these people from leaving. "What's really terrifying about violence is its brutal indifference," Saulnier explains. "It's not these convoluted maniacal evil plots; it's self-preservation and a disregard for others. For Darcy's character, it was fun to have a



"IMOGEN POOTS RARELY GETS THE CHANCE TO JUST GO BANANAS!"

JEREMY SAULNIER

man of such presence in Patrick Stewart give this really grounded performance. He took no pleasure in this plan, and if he could turn back time and prevent it from happening, he would. He's simply trying to preserve his self-interests and clean up this mess. Patrick and I worked intimately to achieve that, and that was to deliver this really quiet performance. He remarked that it was the quietest he's ever spoken on stage or on screen. That was a really fun thing to do, to take a man of such presence and bring him down several notches, and let his actions speak louder than his words."

"HE REMARKED THAT
IT WAS THE QUIETEST
HE'S EVER SPOKEN ON
STAGE OR ON SCREEN"
JEREMY SAULNIER

BUILDING TO A CRESCENDO

Watching *Green Room* is a truly immersive experience, gripping you by the throat as these characters are plunged into this claustrophobic hell. "Working technically within those confines is incredibly difficult," Saulnier stresses. "You have to maintain a level of intensity and emotional charge to all these scenes with nowhere else to go. To keep the pace and the plot unfolding, primarily in one room, was a huge challenge. It's supposed to seem like [a] snowball effect unfolding before you, [but] there's an insane downward spiral that's very immediate."

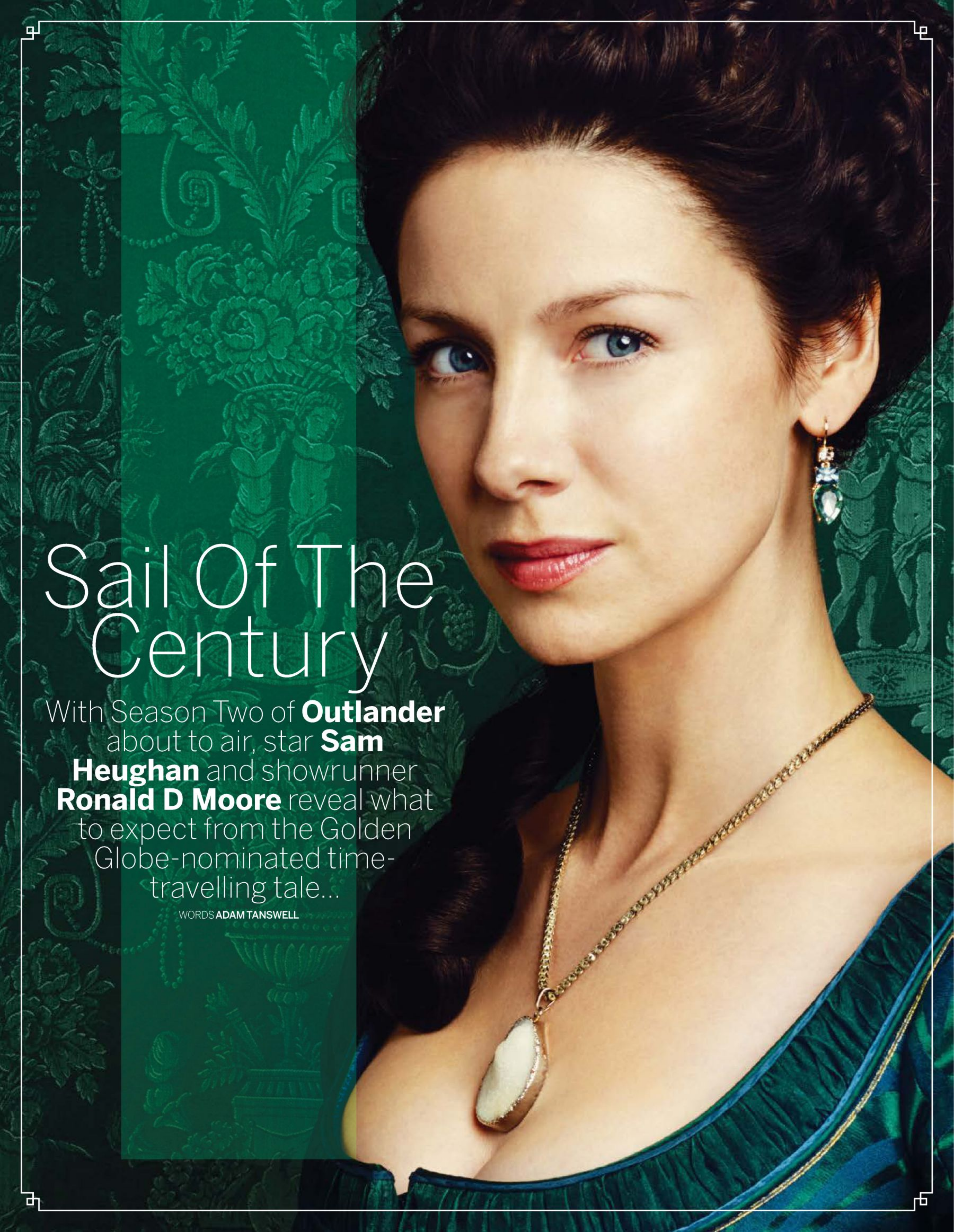
Although the film's siege plot has drawn comparisons with John Carpenter's *Assault On Precinct 13*, Saulnier tells us that it wasn't his starting point. "*Assault On Precinct 13* seemed like such a close reference that I was afraid to even watch it!" he laughs. "I decided it would be a great reference, but I wouldn't watch it until after I'd finished the screenplay. Films like *Apocalypse Now* are the primary references that I was highlighting to my cast and crew, to treat it like a war."



Green Room will be released in UK cinemas on 13 May.



Stage and screen legend Sir Patrick Stewart leads the Neo-Nazi group.



Sail Of The Century

With Season Two of **Outlander** about to air, star **Sam Heughan** and showrunner **Ronald D Moore** reveal what to expect from the Golden Globe-nominated time-travelling tale...

WORDS ADAM TANSWELL



HERE'S A DRASTIC CHANGE OF SCENERY WHEN OUTLANDER RETURNS TO THE

small screen for a second season later this month. The time-travel adventure – which stars Sam Heughan and Caitriona Balfe as the two leads, Jamie Fraser and Claire Randall – see the rugged, untamed landscape of the Highlands swapped for the lavish world of French high society as the historical saga continues.

“You never know where our show is going, which is what makes it exciting,” explains Heughan. “Season Two is a whole new show. There are a lot of new characters and it almost feels like a whole new world. It’s been great to work on something that keeps changing and evolving.”

“I love the fact that *Outlander* is a love story, a historical story, a time-travel story and a war story,” adds the actor. “It’s great to follow this relationship between Jamie and Claire, but the show is not just about that; it’s also about time travel, history, politics and fantasy. It’s not just one genre; it’s all of the above.”

The compelling show is based on the best-selling novels of Diana Gabaldon, an American author whose research into Scotland greatly impressed the Scottish-born star of the series. “I was quite nervous when I first found out that an American had written this show about Scotland,” chuckles Heughan. “As a Scot, you desperately want it to be authentic and true – but Diana researched absolutely everything. She’s sold around 26 million copies of her books, and she puts everything into her work. It’s fantastic.”

“In the first season, Scotland was a big theme of the show, and I fell in love with my country again,” the actor continues. “I wanted to bring our culture to the rest of the world, and I think we did that, but it’s very different in Season Two. We have so many different locations and the sets are incredible – but the story is never set in one place; it’s always moving forward. I think that’s why viewers like the show, because it’s always changing. Now I’m on another journey with Jamie, who is trying to find who he is. He’s trying to deal with the things that happened at the end of Season One, and he’s trying to deal with a whole new life in France.”

The first season of the time-travel saga – which saw a World War II nurse (played by Balfe) transported back to the Scottish Highlands of the 18th century – was based on the first book in Gabaldon’s fantasy series; a novel that was originally called *Cross Stitch* in the UK. The final episodes of the series certainly packed a powerful punch with Heughan’s character being horrifically tortured and physically abused at the hands of Jonathan ‘Black Jack’ Randall (Tobias



Caitriona Balfe and Sam Heughan return as Claire and Jamie in Season Two.

“SCOTLAND WAS A BIG THEME, AND I FELL IN LOVE WITH MY COUNTRY AGAIN”
SAM HEUGHAN

Menzies) – but freedom soon followed, and the end of the season saw Claire and Jamie pictured on board a boat headed for France. What happens next? We can reveal that Season Two is based on the second novel in the series, *Dragonfly In Amber*, which culminates with the protagonists trying to stop the Battle of Culloden, the final battle that ended the Jacobite Rising, a loss that forever changed Scotland.

“Season Two picks up directly from the end of Season One,” explains showrunner Ronald D Moore. “Season One was set in Scotland, but Jamie and Claire are on a ship heading to France at the start of Season Two, and they are thinking, ‘Hey, let’s try to change history. Let’s try to stop the Jacobite Rebellion.’ That’s essentially what happens in Season Two. They land in France, and they set themselves up in Paris with the aid of Jamie’s cousin, Jared. They soon have a place to live, and there’s a wine business that allows them income – and then they set about trying to meet the key players in the Jacobite rebellion. They try to figure out how to get inside the rebellion so they can stop it. It’s a very different show to Season One.”

Moore is no stranger to the fantasy genre; the screenwriter and producer has a solid background in sci-fi shows including *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *Deep Space Nine*, *Voyager* and the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* television series. When it comes to the time travel element of the show, Moore admits that there is more on the way, but the team decided to take their time. “Science fiction is the catalyst for the entire story of *Outlander*,” Moore explains. “The time-travel element is what makes the show stand out ➤



This time, the action has changed locations from Scotland to France.

It remains to be seen how Claire’s time in the past will affect her present.





MUST-SEE TV

Outlander

➤ and be unique. This story of a 20th Century woman who is suddenly thrust into the 18th Century is an incredibly intriguing premise, and it's exciting. I think that's why people have enjoyed time travel stories like this since HG Wells, because there is something fascinating about the idea of going to another time and another place. That said, we agreed that once we'd done that in the first season, we didn't want the show to just be about time travel. We wanted to live in the time period for a while to ground the story as much as we could. There is more time travel in subsequent books and storylines – and we will eventually get to those things as well, but we wanted to breathe in the time period before that happens again.”

“There's a lot going on in Season Two,” adds the showrunner. “At the beginning of

the season, Claire is pregnant and Murtagh (Duncan Lacroix) is with them, but there's a whole new set of characters in the Parisian story. Some of the French characters are real historical figures, such as King Louis XV and Bonnie Prince Charlie. There's also the Count of St Germaine; another real character who is one of our villains in the show – but there are a whole bunch of characters who are unique to the book as well. The first half of the book is set in Paris and it's very political. There are a lot of conspiracies, gossip and double-dealing as they try to stop Culloden – and then the book shifts for their return to Scotland. At that point, it's a war story. It's two very distinct halves. You won't really see any of the Scottish family that we introduced in Season One until the show returns to Scotland later in the season.”

Despite the French setting for the first half of Season Two, the cast and crew utilised locations in Scotland, England and the Czech Republic to replicate Paris and Versailles. “We went to Prague for some of the exteriors of Paris and Versailles, as well as Salisbury – but we also have some incredible sets in Scotland,” reveals Heughan. “We have a studio in Glasgow that we built in 2014 and we have all these amazing craftsmen. We have a whole section of builders and carpenters who made French furniture from the 18th century. We now have four sound stages, so it really is its own little world that's slowly getting bigger and bigger. I can't wait to find out where we're headed next.”

Outlander Season Two will air on Amazon Prime from 10 April.

Season Two takes place in the build-up to the Jacobite Rebellion.



“THEY TRY TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET INSIDE THE REBELLION SO THEY CAN STOP IT”
RONALD D MOORE

For added drama, Claire is carrying a baby.



The new setting afforded the opportunity for a whole new aesthetic.

Final Fantasy

Other genre epics on their way to TV



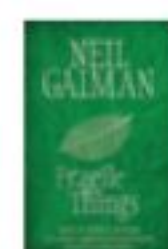
Red Mars
Author: Kim Stanley Robinson
Network: Spike TV

None other than J Michael Straczynski (*Babylon 5*, *Sense8*) will take this space-faring sci-fi series to the small screen, telling of the attempts to colonise the Red Planet.



Midnight, Texas
Author: Charlaine Harris
Network: NBC

Fang-bangers rejoice – *True Blood* writer Harris is returning to TV screens with this supernatural psychic drama. Expect just as much blood and gore as its predecessor.



Likely Stories
Author: Neil Gaiman
Network: Sky

In addition to the upcoming *American Gods* series, a number of Gaiman's short stories are being adapted cherry-picked from *Fragile Things*, *Smoke And Mirrors*, *Trigger Warning* and more.



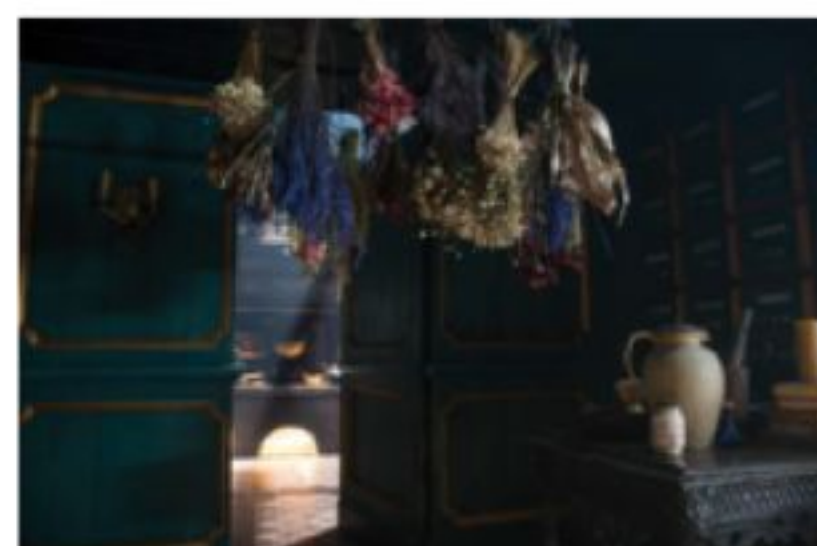
Hyperion
Author: Dan Simmons
Network: Syfy

There hasn't been any progress on this for a while, but it has the benefit of counting Bradley Cooper among its fans, who is determined to turn the mythology-inspired saga into a Syfy event series.



His Dark Materials
Author: Philip Pullman
Network: BBC

After the failure that was *The Golden Compass*, the BBC is going all out in its latest crack at taking on Philip Pullman's fantasy trilogy, buddying up with New Line Cinema.



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SYNTHS OF DARKNESS

IT'S NOT HYPERBOLIC TO SAY THAT JOHN CARPENTER IS ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL FILMMAKERS ALIVE. IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO IGNORE THE EXTENT TO WHICH HIS WORK

looms over modern genre cinema and beyond, whether it's Quentin Tarantino admitting to channelling *The Thing* in *The Hateful Eight*, Jeff Nichols taking the essential story of *Starman* for *Midnight Special*, every horror director from Adam Wingard (*The Guest*) to David Robert Mitchell (*It Follows*) using *Halloween* as a blueprint, or every Eighties throwback using pounding synth themes. He's everywhere.

"I have no idea about that," Carpenter demurs when we bring up his impact. Surely, we insist, he must be aware of how important he's been to a generation of filmmakers who routinely point to him as a creative touchstone? Everyone who has ripped off *The Fog*, *Escape From New York*, *Big Trouble In Little China*, *Assault On Precinct 13*, *They Live...*? "No, I have no idea," he laughs. "Because here's one thing you must

know about my life: nobody ever tells me anything. No one! They never tell me anything. So I don't know anything."

We've been given the opportunity to talk to Carpenter about the release of *Lost Themes II*, the follow-up to his 2015 record of new music. Carpenter's film scores have been driven into the consciousness of audiences just as strongly as the films themselves. We've keenly felt his absence on the big screen in the six years since his last directorial effort, *The Ward*, but he says the chance to create music that wasn't bound to an image was hugely liberating.

"Oh, it's awesome!" he enthuses. "It's absolutely awesome, I love it. And you're right, the word is liberating, it's really true. Yeah, a film score is a different animal altogether, so you approach it differently. A film score is there to support images and moods in an existing movie. That's its purpose, so you proceed accordingly. You watch the film. Everything comes out of watching the images. This is: we're on our own. We are simply making music for its own sake, for music's sake. Which is great, I just love it."

Instead, the music on his *Lost Themes* records does the work of creating images. Listening to Carpenter's synthesisers, it's very easy to imagine the kind of film it would go with, whether it's a sci-fi, horror, western or romance.

"Most people have a movie in their head, and I am the soundtrack for that," he tells us. "That's we hoped for. We wanted to evoke. We wanted to evoke images and moments for you. Visual images and moments in time." The 'we' in this case is Carpenter, his son Cody (who worked on the excellent scores for Carpenter's *Masters Of Horror* episodes 'Cigarette Burns' and 'Pro-Life', both must-watches) and his godson Daniel Davies (son of The Kinks' Ray Davies), and their collaboration has come about through improvised sessions that have produced something special.

"Sure, it was improvised," he remembers. "But we kind of knew the format this time, so it wasn't as a recording in the dark, so to speak. We knew what we wanted to do, and we were all in same city at the same time, which was different for us. Generally it was the same way: just go and improvise some music. Like, 'Let's go!'"

Given his talent and love for it, it's not too much of a surprise to learn that Carpenter's love of and affinity for music goes back a long way. "Well, ➤

WE TALK TO THE LEGENDARY JOHN CARPENTER ABOUT HIS NEW RECORD, CREATING THE PERFECT SCORE AND WHY HE DOESN'T HAVE MUCH TO SAY ABOUT HIS IMITATORS

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL

➤ music was a part of life growing up," Carpenter explains. "My father was a musician. I grew up with music, and I don't know that it was as important [as movies], but it was always present in my life. And I loved popular music, rock and roll. And I loved scoring music, and classical music... I mean, I just loved music. So it's always been there, lurking in the background."

Filmmaking was always his primary focus, but his work as a composer goes all the way back to his lo-fi sci-fi debut *Dark Star* (co-written with *Alien*'s Dan O'Bannon). The gleefully ramshackle production values are charming rather than distracting (who could forget that beach ball?), and the filmmakers' potential for so much more is very much in evidence. As for Carpenter composing the score for the film – well, we're told there wasn't much of a choice.

"Early on, it was really a functional thing," Carpenter explains. "Because as a student filmmaker or a low-budget filmmaker, you just don't have the money to hire a composer, an orchestra and a place to record the orchestra. There's just no money for that. So I, with a synthesiser, even an old crude one or using a keyboard, I could sound big. And I could play movie music on a synthesiser and kind of fake an orchestra. So that's where it all started."

As a filmmaker, Carpenter has always pointed to directors like Howard Hawks, John Ford and Alfred Hitchcock as his primary influences, and that is certainly evident in his work. *Assault On Precinct 13* relocates *Rio Bravo* to a besieged LA police station, *Halloween* obviously owes a huge debt to *Psycho*, and later movies like *Vampires* and *Ghosts Of Mars* make no attempt to hide the fact that they're

westerns. As a composer, he's able to be even more specific about his influences.

"In terms of first soundtracks, I know exactly the movie it was," Carpenter enthuses. "It was in 1956, I saw a movie called *Forbidden Planet*. It had a synthesised soundtrack, and it was stunning. I'd never heard anything like it. It was transformative. I've never been the same since."

Carpenter's work has had the same massive impact on a legion of filmmakers and musicians. His films' themes are just as identifiable as the films themselves, but the idea of a 'John Carpenter sound' quickly leads to self-deprecation. "Well, the only stamp on a John Carpenter score is that it's simple enough for John Carpenter to play!" he laughs. "I have minimal chops. I'm not that great, so it has to be simple and basic."

Simple might describe some of the synth work on his soundtracks, but it absolutely does it a disservice. Few composers have conjured a mood or sense of atmosphere as brilliantly as Carpenter. Whether it's turning the wide streets of suburbia into a haunted nightmare in *Halloween* or giving Kurt Russell's big-mouthed trucker Jack Burton the bad-ass sounds he deserves in *Big Trouble In Little China*, there's a versatility there that continues to be overlooked. "I

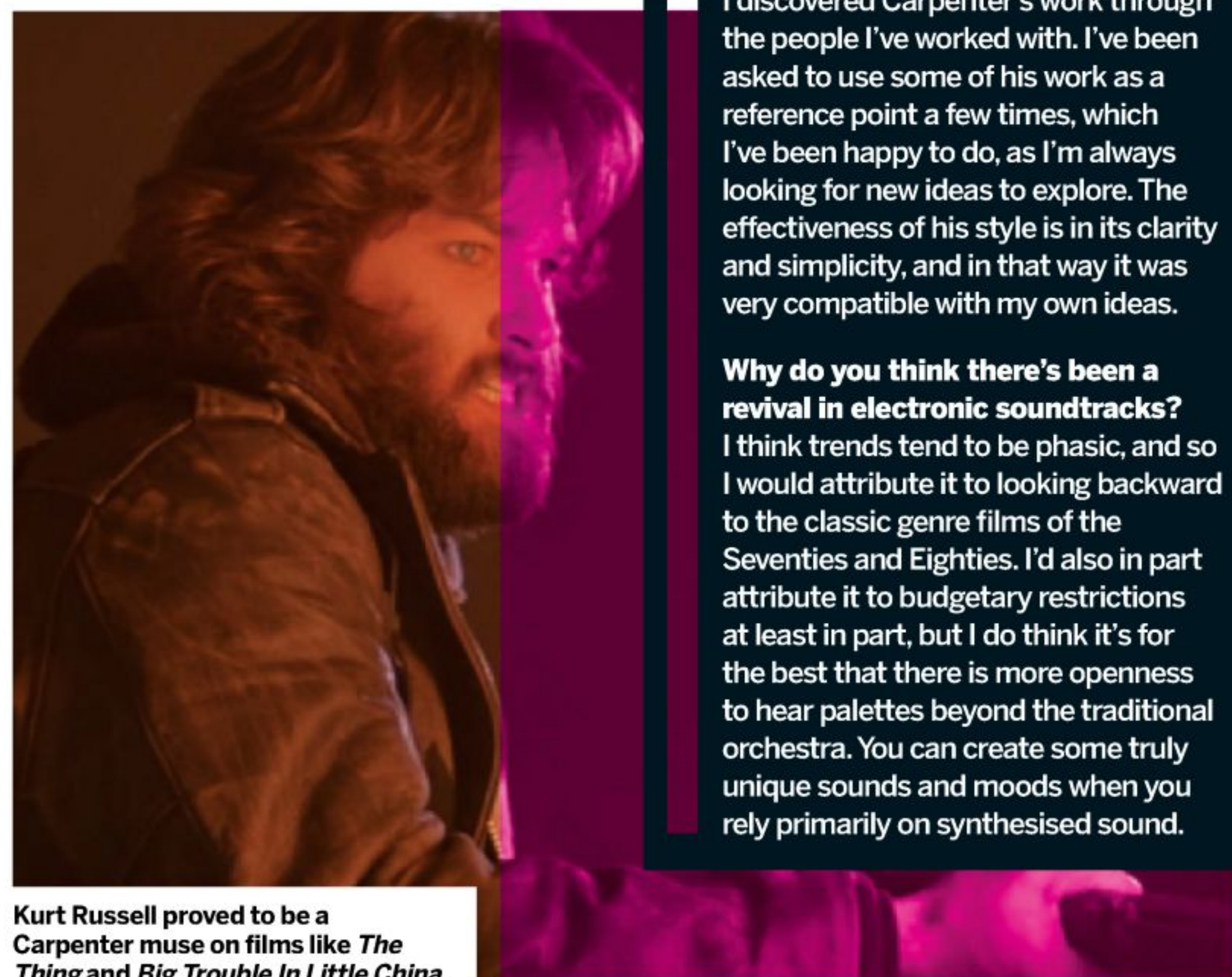
DISASTERPEACE ON JOHN CARPENTER THE IT FOLLOWS COMPOSER ON THE RISE OF ELECTRONIC SOUNDTRACKS

How has his work impacted on you?

I discovered Carpenter's work through the people I've worked with. I've been asked to use some of his work as a reference point a few times, which I've been happy to do, as I'm always looking for new ideas to explore. The effectiveness of his style is in its clarity and simplicity, and in that way it was very compatible with my own ideas.

Why do you think there's been a revival in electronic soundtracks?

I think trends tend to be phasic, and so I would attribute it to looking backward to the classic genre films of the Seventies and Eighties. I'd also in part attribute it to budgetary restrictions at least in part, but I do think it's for the best that there is more openness to hear palettes beyond the traditional orchestra. You can create some truly unique sounds and moods when you rely primarily on synthesised sound.



Kurt Russell proved to be a Carpenter muse on films like *The Thing* and *Big Trouble In Little China*.

DARK STAR

SEE YOU HOW YOU CAN'T MAKE A GENRE FILM WITHOUT RIPPING OFF JOHN CARPENTER

Paranoia
Quentin Tarantino, *The Hateful Eight*, *Reservoir Dogs*, *The Mist*, *Cabin Fever*, *The Faculty*, [REC], *The World's End*

Unstoppable killers
Friday 13th, a million slasher movies, *The Guest*, *You're Next*, *Rob Zombie's Halloween*

Home invasion
You're Next, *The Strangers*, *It*, *Inside*, *Switchblade Romance*, *Panic Room*

Terrifying suburbia
A Nightmare On Elm Street, *Scream*, *Ginger Snaps*, *Donnie Darko*, *It Follows*

Bloody siege movies
Green Room, *Attack The Block*, *The Purge*, *Let Us Prey*, *From Dusk Till Dawn*, *Dog Soldiers*, *Panic Room*

Electronic film scores
Drive, *Only God Forgives*, *The Social Network*, *It Follows*, *The Guest*, *The Mind's Eye*

Massive cynicism
Dredd, *Serenity*, *Doomsday*, *Snowpiercer*, *Lockout*, *Daybreakers*, *Land Of The Dead*, *Mr Robot*

The Thing-esque body horror
The Blob, *Akira*, *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*, *Event Horizon*, *Phantoms*, *Slither*, *Planet Terror*, *Monsters Vs Aliens*, *Almost Human*

Secret Westerns
No Country For Old Men, *Red Hill*, *Justified*, *Breaking Bad*, *Firefly*, *Outland*

F* you endings**
The Descent, *The Cabin In The Woods*, *The Vanishing*, *Ex Machina*, *Oldboy*, *The Mist*

Kurt Russell
Death Proof, *Fast & Furious 7*, *Guardians Of The Galaxy: Volume 2*

have my favourites," he says. "The score to *In The Mouth Of Madness* being one that I really, really love. And I love the score I did to *Vampires*, I thought that was good."

Of course, we couldn't pass up the chance to ask about his collaboration on the score for *The Thing* with the great Ennio Morricone. "Well, he recorded music away from the movie," he remembers. "And we collaborated as director and composer on the opening theme and the closing theme, just the simplicity of it. Morricone came from an experimental music position, and he's just brilliant. Brilliant composer. Some of the most memorable music ever."

Shortly after our interview with Carpenter, Morricone won an Oscar for his work on Tarantino's *The Hateful Eight*, the last in a torrent of long-overdue awards that Morricone has been given for his most recent work. For his part, Carpenter remains an outsider who still doesn't seem to be given the respect he so richly deserves, despite the fact that so many are working in his shadow. Even the films that haven't quite enjoyed the same critical reappraisal, like *Prince Of Darkness* and *In The Mouth Of Madness*, are getting better with age. *They Live*, in particular, feels frighteningly relevant.

"Well, because the Eighties never has gone away!" he says. "It's still with us, we're still living it! And this whole thing that I rebel against was what caused the Great Recession. This unrestrained capitalism. The things that happened to cause the great recession were unbelievable. Were unbelievable! They're insane! And yet they were part of the financial system. It's crazy. Now I'm getting upset. I don't want to get upset."

One thing that Carpenter keeps coming back to during our interview is just how

much pleasure he derives from his work as a musician, and he stresses that there is an absolute separation between filming and composing.

"The music I remember listening to when we were shooting *Halloween* was Warren Zevon's 'Werewolves Of London,'" he tells us. "So that particular song is from *Halloween* to me. But the soundtrack was something completely different. By the time I got around to composing the music I'd been beaten to shit by the directing process, I don't want any more! I want it to go easy. I want music to be joyous, that's what I want."

To that end, Carpenter and the *Lost Themes* team are going on tour. "We're going to do the music that you associate with horror, but we're going to do *Big Trouble In Little China*, which is kind of rock and roll, and we're going to do the opening theme to *They Live*, which is blues! 4-5 blues, so it's a whole lot of fun," he enthuses. "And then the heavy metal on *In The Mouth Of Madness* is great fun."

"I'm excited and terrified at the same time!" he laughs. "I'm an old man; I don't know what's going to happen if I walk out on the stage, people are going to start booing! When I was coming out of high school and college I played in a rock and roll band. I hate playing live, it's terrifying! It bugs me!" Finally, we wonder, would he be open to scoring someone else's film? "Sure!" he exclaims. "I'll score your movie if you want! You just have to pay me, that's all!" We're going to get to work. ☞



Lost Themes II comes out on 15 April via Sacred Bones. John Carpenter will be touring throughout the year.

It's easy to forget how effective the music was on films like *Halloween*.



OF ALL THE FILMS WE SAW AT LAST YEAR'S LONDON FILM FESTIVAL, NONE WERE QUITE AS STRIKING AS LUCILE HADZIHILLOVIC'S *EVOLUTION*. SURE, SOME WERE MORE

shocking, frightening or funny, but no film delivered that feeling you can only get at the cinema. It's a truly immersive sensory experience that blends genres for something quite extraordinary. It's a horror film, it's sci-fi, it's a fairy tale, and it doesn't give its audience any easy answers.

"I hope that it's talking about very simple and human things," Hadzihalilovic tells us. "The story is more of a superficial thing that helps me to have these images, feelings and emotions. So it's a bit like *Eraserhead*; you don't understand everything, but you understand what it's about. I hope it could be the same with the film. When I watch a film, I like to participate. I have to make my path through it, and I think it stays more in my mind when I do that, when I don't get everything somehow. If you receive a message, it can be a very interesting message but it's less cinematic to me. You have to make it your own."

The film is the story of Nicolas (Max Brebant), an apparently sickly ten-year-old who lives with his mother (Julie-Marie Parmentier) on a small island, seemingly in the Mediterranean. As the film progresses, we see that the only inhabitants are boys of the same age and the women who care for them. One day Nicolas is diving when he sees a boy's corpse underwater, but no one believes him. When Nicolas is taken to the island's hospital, he will make some startling discoveries about himself and the women who are so invested in his wellbeing.

"I guess I know where it comes from," smiles Hadzihalilovic. "The more I've been asked about it, the more obvious it seems to me that of course, it comes from my own childhood and memories of that age. When I was ten I had appendicitis, and I went to the hospital for the first time in my life, and it was nothing dramatic, but it was a very strong experience because it was the first time I had adults touching

my body, and even open it. Also because it was a moment of changes. I was 11, it was right at the beginning of puberty so it has a stronger resonance and a more confused one probably! It's probably the heart of it."

This confused approach to anatomy is a key element of *Evolution*, but while there is body horror in this potent mixture, it's much more than just a horror film, which Hadzihalilovic tells us made finding investors a problem. It's been about ten years since she delivered her brilliant debut *Innocence*, and she tells us that she's not been focused on any other project since.

"I said that it was a genre film," she remembers. "I thought it would make it understandable. 'It's a horror film,' I would say, 'with other kinds of elements and it's not a typical horror movie.' So that was a difficulty, that it was in between different things. I thought that as a genre film it would have been more understandable, it was more narrative and less abstract than *Innocence*, but in fact it's not like a typical genre film. It was not a commercial genre film, so we had to find money from people who give money for more auteur films. And in France and even in Belgium, this kind of metaphorical thing is not in the culture I guess, so for them it was a bit impure! Because it deals with genre, with horror specifically."

Indeed, there are plenty of classic horror touchstones, from Angela Carter's dark coming-of-age stories and Kazuo Ishiguro's tragic gene-meddling to David Cronenberg's interest in aberrant biology and the grandfather of any weird seaside story: HP Lovecraft. "It's a kind of fairy tale," explains Hadzihalilovic. "It's funny, because at the very beginning when *Evolution* was being shown there were some who talked about Lovecraft, and I said, 'Yeah, but it's obvious because I read Lovecraft when I was a teenager, and it had a big impact on me.' So yeah, it also has elements from that and it's not at all an adaptation of it, but maybe something of *The Island Of Dr Moreau*."

Leaving aside the blurring of genres, we're obliged to mention that *Evolution*

is strikingly beautiful. Cinematographer Manuel Dacosse does stunning work with the underwater photography, showing us a whole world that is teeming with movement and life. "It's a film that you have to experience through the sounds and the images, and it's not so much in the narrative; it's not in the characters or the dialogue," Hadzihalilovic tells us.

While it may have been a long journey for the film, the result is worth the wait. "I can't believe the good reactions I've had!" she laughs. "We've had very good reactions from people who seem to have really understood the film. For years people were saying, 'We don't get it, what is this bizarre stuff, what is the meaning of it?' So it's a very good surprise to get a good reaction now!"

Evolution is out in UK cinemas on 6 May.

UNNATURAL

WE TALK TO FILMMAKER LUCILE HADZIHILLOVIC ABOUT CREATING THE STUNNING CINEMATIC EXPERIENCE THAT IS *EVOLUTION*

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL



SELECTION



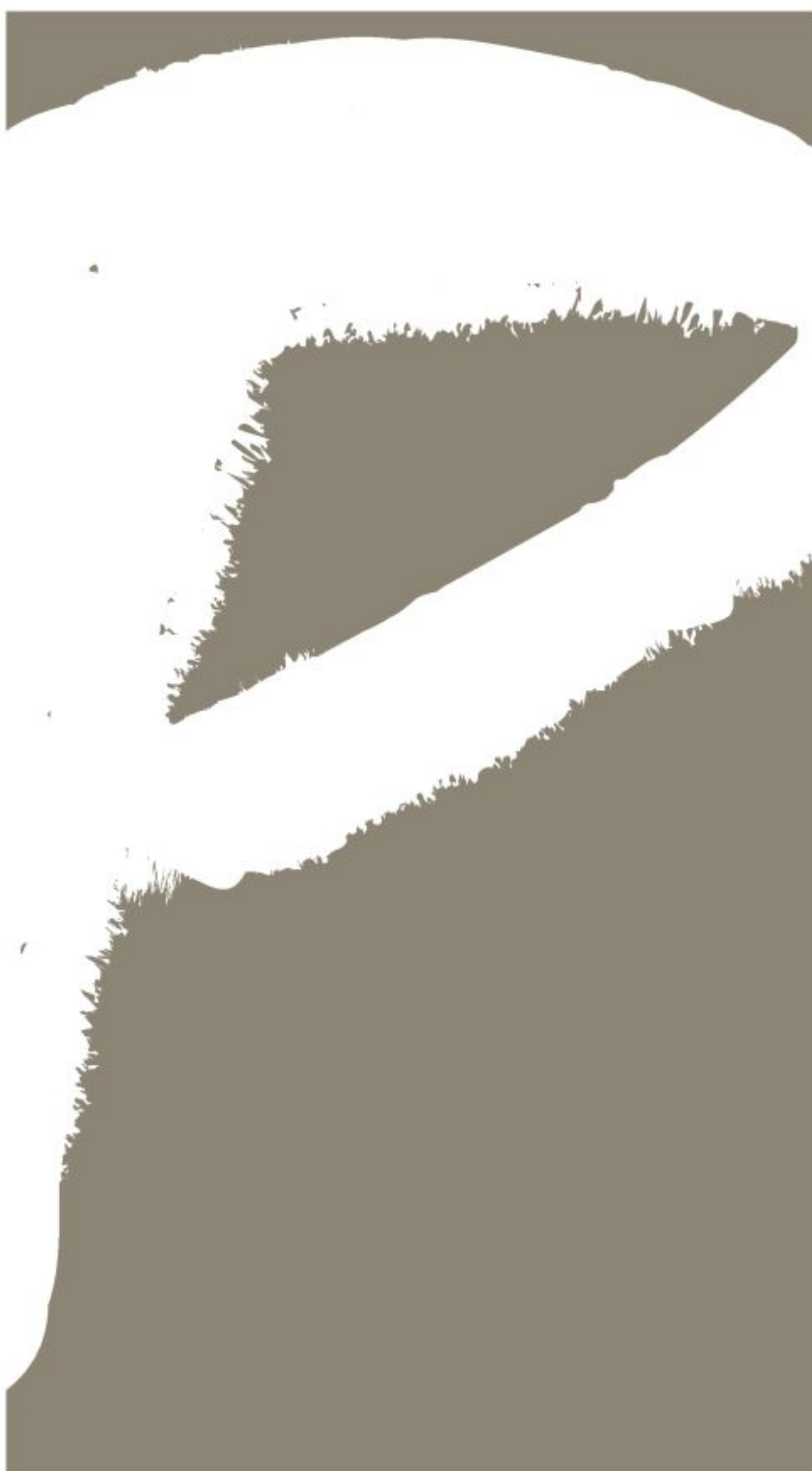
THE WALKING



WE TALK TO THE CAST AND CREW OF OUTCAST ABOUT SCARING VIEWERS, AND WHY IT IS THE NEW WALKING DEAD

WORDS ABIGAIL CHANDLER

OUTCASTS



Outcast is the latest comic-book adaptation from the mind of Robert Kirkman.

Philip Glenister isn't kidding when he says you'll know within the first minute whether *Outcast* is for you.

The opening scene of the pilot episode is one of the most visceral pieces of pure horror on television. It has it all: body horror, jump scares, a creepy kid, even bugs. You thought the little girl zombie in the first episode of *The Walking Dead* was bad? You ain't seen nothing yet.

"That's what I like and admire about [*Outcast*]; it's not apologising," *Life On Mars* star Glenister tells us. "It's basically saying, 'This is the show, this is what it's going to be about folks, so if you're with us, great, stick with us, but if it's not your cup of tea, turn over now.'" He's nothing short of gleeful at the notion of scaring the holy hell out of viewers.

The comparison with *The Walking Dead* is there for a reason: *Outcast* is the brain child of comic-book writer Robert Kirkman. Where *The Walking Dead* is a survival horror, *Outcast* handles demonic possession.

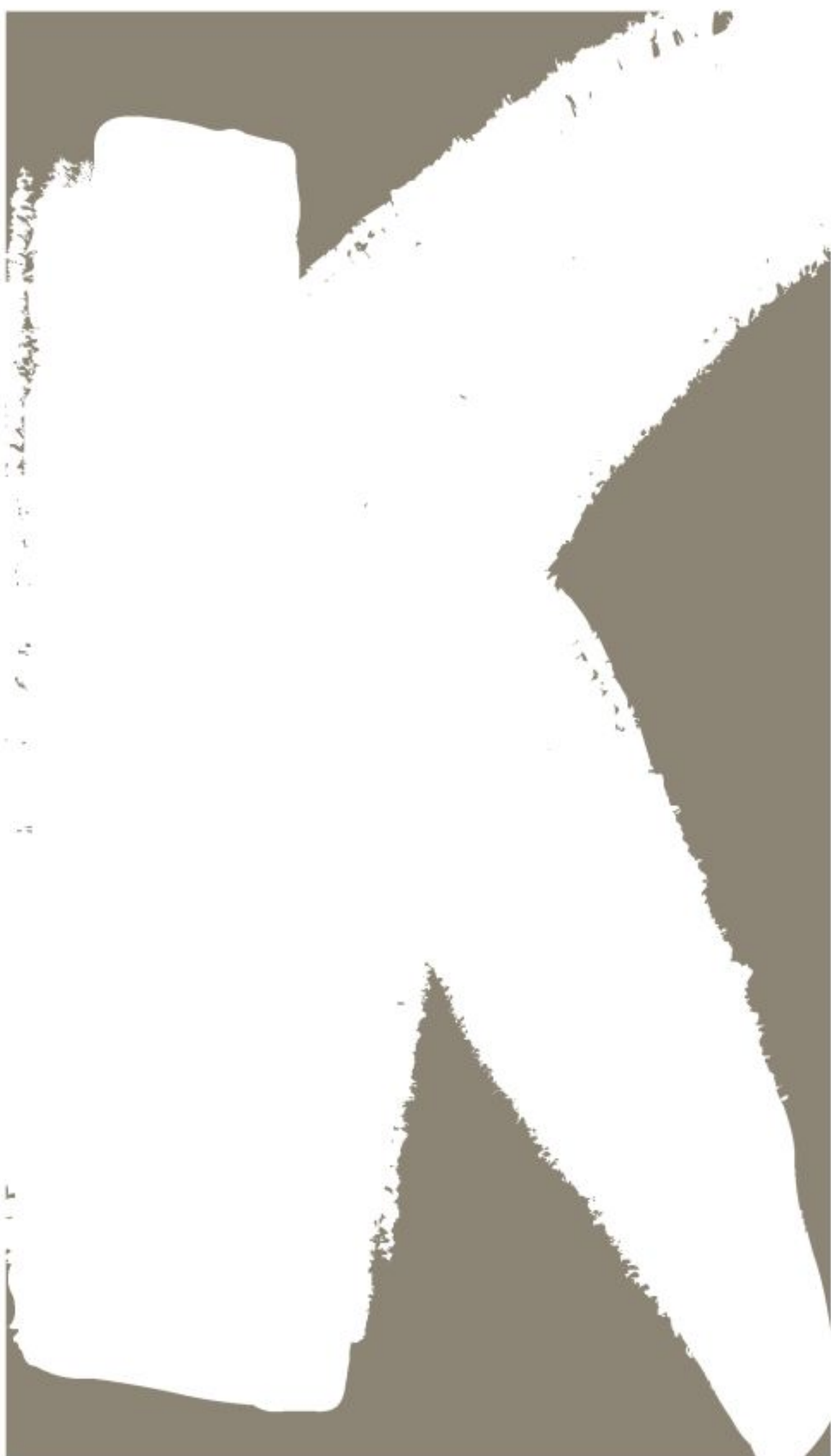
Showrunner Chris Black (*Star Trek: Enterprise*) is keen to point out that *Outcast* isn't a horror show; "It's a character show with horrific elements." It's not just a straightforward possession show either. "[Kirkman's] attitude was, 'Why doesn't anybody look at [possession] as a problem that can be solved, like a public health issue?' It's a contagion, an outbreak. And when you figure out where these things are coming from and what they want, you can stop them and maybe you won't have to keep having exorcisms. And that's, I think, the bigger story he wants to tell."

Outcast centres on Kyle, played by *Almost Famous*' Patrick Fugit, a young man who has been followed by demons his whole life. "He has never been possessed himself," Fugit explains, "but he has a distinct feeling that people who get close to him become possessed somehow, like he's infected or something like that." ➤

"IT ADDRESSES THE BIG ISSUE: HOW DOES EVIL COME INTO PEOPLE'S LIVES?"
CHRIS BLACK



Philip Glenister plays 'rock star' exorcist Reverend Anderson.



➤ Kyle crosses paths with Glenister's Reverend Anderson, a hard-drinking preacher with a sideline in exorcism, and the two team up to find out why possession has been plaguing Kyle, and to exorcise their own personal demons along the way.

Anderson is the sort of evangelical preacher that Glenister terms 'rock stars', but with one key difference: "I don't think he's a charlatan. I think a lot of them are, but I don't think Anderson is... He gave up his family for the calling. It's his duty, this service to wipe out the Devil and God knows what at the expense of his family. Of course, as the series unfolds he really starts questioning his belief, his faith and whether he's done the right thing.

"Kyle is the one who seems to have this power," continues Glenister, "and Anderson, who's maybe his mentor, starts to question his own beliefs and starts thinking, 'Hang on, why has this kid got it and why haven't I anymore?' It causes a friction between them."

Everyone involved in the show is keen to stress that while the pilot episode sets up the world with a classic exorcism (of a child, nonetheless), that's not what every episode is going to be like. "It's not 'CSI: Demons', it's not procedural, it's not 'exorcism of the week'," showrunner Chris Black says, "but it's more about addressing a bigger issue: how does evil come into people's lives? In different ways, sometimes from a supernatural place and sometimes good old-fashioned, human, home-grown evil, and they have to deal with that too."

To stress that the 'demons' theme is figurative as well as literal, the show also has the character of Megan, Kyle's adopted sister, someone who is entirely removed from the world of demonic possessions. "[Megan] likes getting things fixed. She likes projects, and right now Kyle is her project," Black explains. But,



Patrick Fugit stars as the troubled protagonist, Kyle Barnes.

as with most science fiction and fantasy shows, Megan has demons of her own to deal with. Black says that *Outcast* is "about the demons everybody carries inside them. And that's what makes Megan an important, integral part of the cast; that it's about something more than exorcisms."

For Fugit, the horror elements weren't what drew him to the show. "Ultimately, what I get attracted to is good storytelling. Being immersed in a world that has a unique context is always fun. Once I started reading *Outcast*, I realised it's not really a show about possessions, but about people and how this is affecting them. They react to it in sort of a realistic way. The show itself doesn't seem to believe in the supernatural, and the characters don't seem to believe

in the supernatural, so when the supernatural starts happening it is even more unsettling."

The relationship between Kyle and Anderson is clearly the beating heart of the show. Glenister confessed that he did little research for the role beyond perfecting his Southern drawl ("What do you say? You meet a priest, you say, 'Okay, I'm playing this guy, he likes to smoke, he likes to drink, he gambles, he thinks of himself as a bit of a rock star in his sermons, does that relate to you at all?!?'"). Instead, he focused on Kyle and Anderson. "When we were doing the audition process I met up with Patrick in LA for chemistry tests, so we spent a whole day going through scenes and talking about the relationship. That's the most important thing really, that relationship."



pisode one is faithful to the first issue of the comic, with some shots ripped from the panels. But we're promised that it will start to become its own beast. "[Kirkman] is not precious about the material," Black says. "He believes passionately in the story he wants to tell, and he will defend it, but he also understands it's got to live and grow as a TV show. He trusts me that I'm not going to colossally screw up."

"It's very refreshing to have that trust from your creator," Glenister adds, "who's sort of saying, 'Look, you're the guys, this is your speciality. My speciality is writing the comic books. So I'll hand it over to you.'"

Even avid readers of the comics may be surprised by the show. It's dark, it's character-driven, it's not a straightforward horror, but scary. "If you thought a kid getting beaten up [was bad]," Glenister whispers, wary of the looming PR, "you wait 'til episode seven."

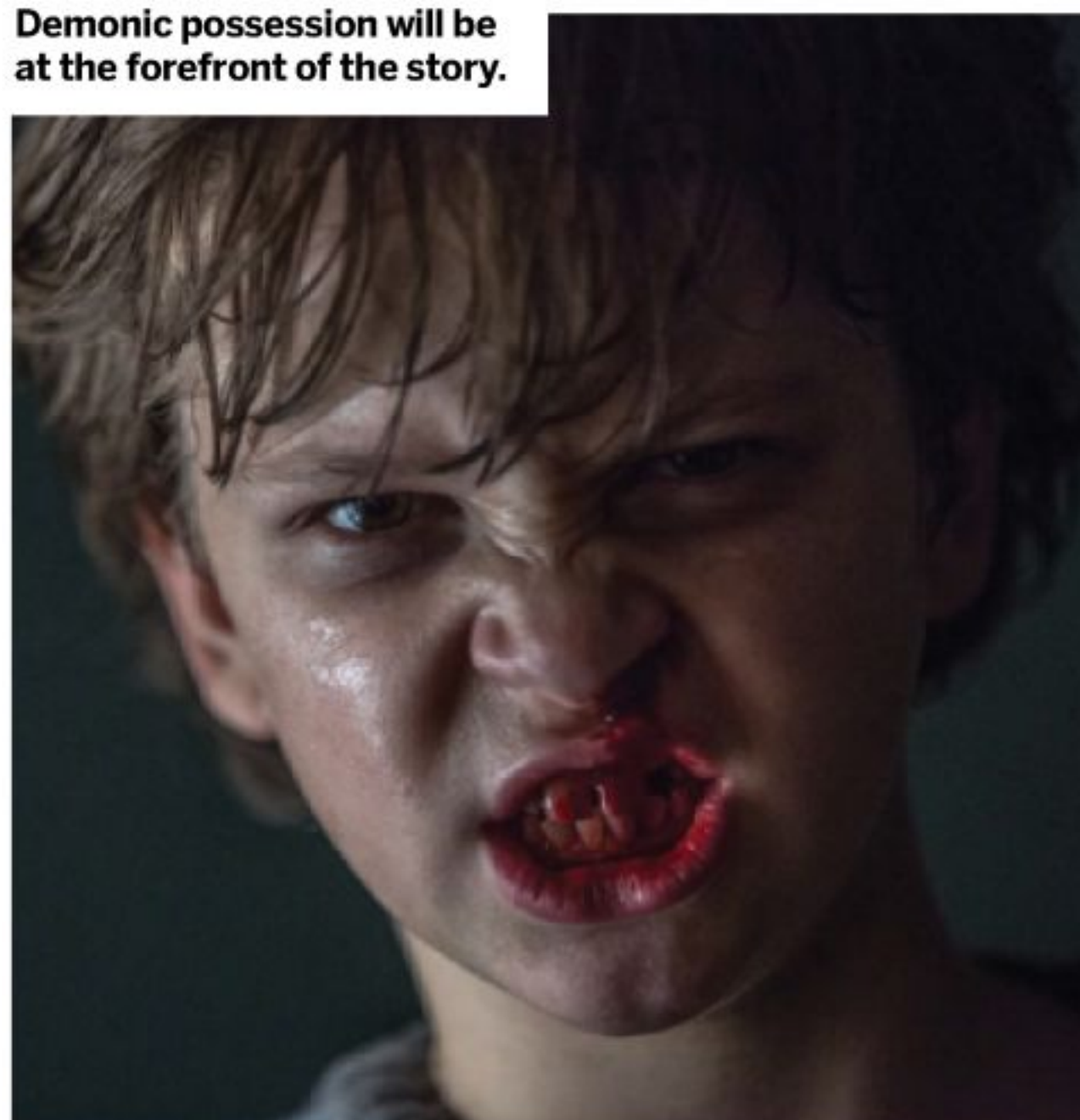
Outcast will air on Fox later this year.



Wrenn Schmidt plays Kyle's adopted sister, Megan.

"IT'S ABOUT THE DEMONS THAT EVERYONE CARRIES INSIDE THEM"
CHRIS BLACK

Demonic possession will be at the forefront of the story.



Interrogating themes like evil and loneliness, *Outcast* looks like it'll be a bleak ride.



OUTCAST VS THE WALKING DEAD

As different as they are, it's impossible not to compare the two shows. They both deal with supernatural horror, they both boast an unexpected Brit in the lead, and they both, crucially, have the same creator: Robert Kirkman. So we asked the cast and writer to break it down and see how the two shows measure up against each other...

GORE LEVELS

Patrick Fugit points out that in *The Walking Dead*, "In almost every episode someone is stabbing walkers in the brains, someone is shooting things, there is a shock value, brutality." That's not the sort of horror that *Outcast* is interested in. "This is more cerebral, more character or plot driven... it's shot like a horror, but it's scary because of what's going on, not necessarily pop-up scares or gory killings."

CHARACTERS

"I'd say that there are fewer characters and more to the relationships," Fugit says. "In *The Walking Dead* you have a huge ensemble, all these different little relationships, you get these two talking for a little while and then those two talking for a little while, that group splits off and there is another group and so on. In this you have core characters and those characters themselves are very complex, when you put them together in these situations it gets even more complex."

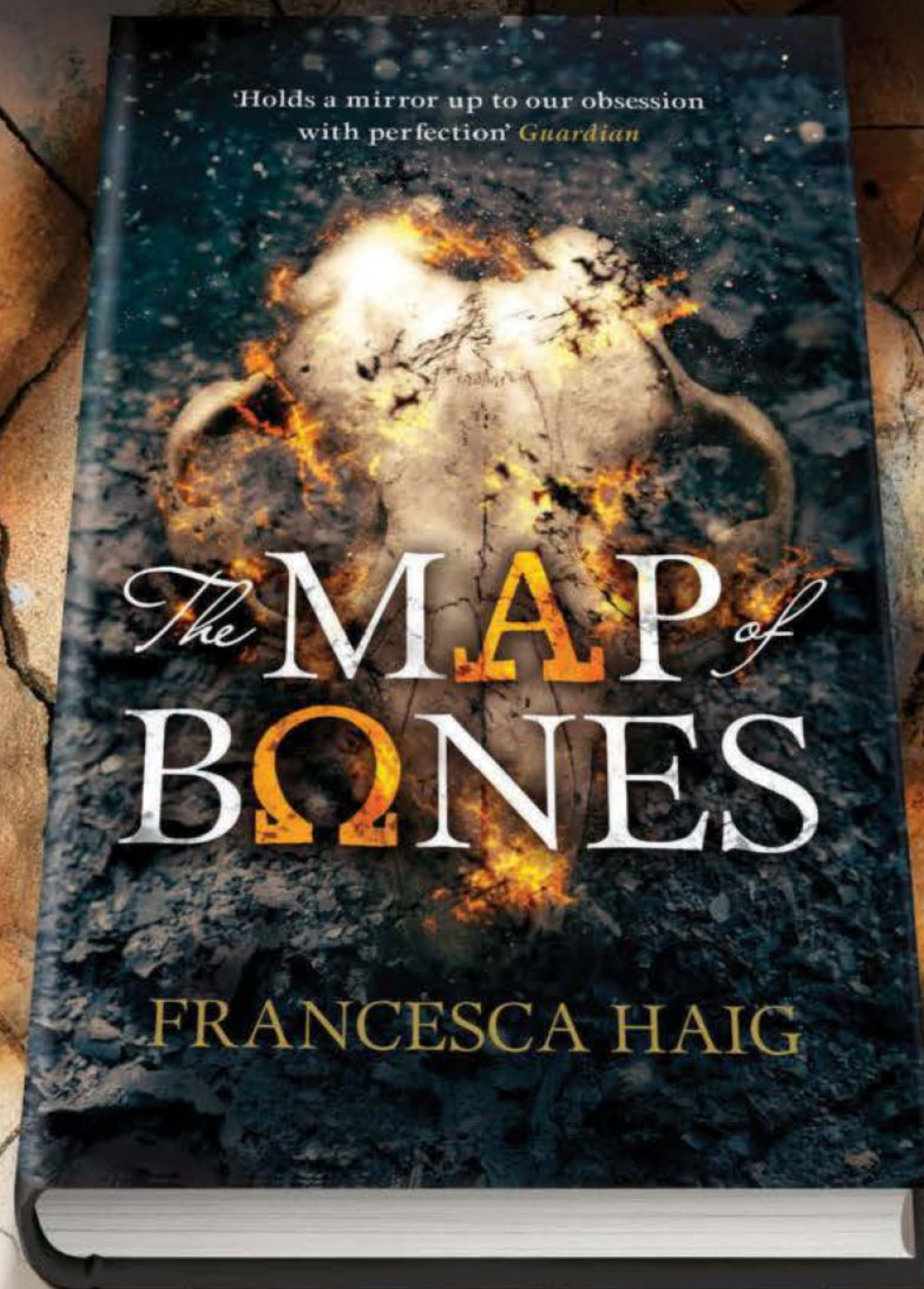
SCALE

"Robert made a conscious decision when he made the [*Outcast*] comic," showrunner Chris Black says. "He's done big horror with *The Walking Dead*, and he wanted to do something more intimate, more personal."

REALISM

"I think there's something slightly more surrealist about *The Walking Dead* because of zombies and things like that," Glenister muses. "Whereas I think the situations and characters in *Outcast* are quite real, you know. In *The Walking Dead* I don't think they're necessarily *meant* to be real, it's sort of, 'Let's chase some zombies,' it's a bit more caricatured in that respect. Whereas in *Outcast* I think there's an element hopefully from the audience's point of view where they think, 'Wow, this could go on here, this could be out there somewhere in small-town America.'"

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the truth forever



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SciFiNow Reviews

Our thoughts on the pick of the entertainment releases out this month



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BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE

"THE ACTION'S GOOD AND THE CAST IS GREAT, BUT IT'S ODDLY SLUGGISH"

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see now!

25.16

TRIVIA BEN AFFLECK GAINED 20 POUNDS OF MUSCLE IN ORDER TO PORTRAY BATMAN.

FILM INFO

Released

Out now

Certificate

12A

Director

Zack Snyder

Screenwriters

Chris Terrio, David S Goyer

Cast

Ben Affleck, Henry Cavill, Jesse Eisenberg, Amy Adams, Gal Gadot, Holly Hunter, Laurence Fishburne

Distributor

Warner Bros

Running Time

151 mins



BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE

Welcome to fight night

NEW FACES

BvS has a deep bench

Holly Hunter

The Oscar winner is great as a Senator looking to put restrictions on Superman, but who has no patience for Lex Luthor's obvious scheming. She has a good line in down home put-downs.

Jeremy Irons

We weren't sure about his casting as Alfred, but he works brilliantly with Affleck, providing some much-needed biting wit and sarcasm to contrast with Bruce's seething rage.

Tao Okamoto

The Hannibal and Wolverine star plays Lex's right hand, Mercy Graves. To be honest, she's a bit wasted; we'd have liked to see more of her. Sorry, Mercy.

Scout McNairy

We love Scout McNairy, but given that his role has been kept under wraps, we'll keep it that way. We'll just say that he's got a fairly small but key role.

You'll already have opinions about *Batman V Superman: Dawn Of Justice*, but after years of anticipation and discussion, what it boils down to is the two and a half hours spent in the dark and whether or not you feel like you enjoyed them. After all, it's only a movie.

Or in the case of *Batman V Superman*, it's three movies, or one movie grappling with the various roles it needs to play. It's the follow-up to *Man Of Steel*, and it's a new take on Batman courtesy of Ben Affleck's embittered Bruce Wayne, and it tees up the genesis of the Justice League, mostly by introducing Gal Gadot's enigmatic Diana Prince. It's a lot to get done and a lot to get right, so the delays and talk of an extended director's cut are hardly

surprising. Writers Chris Terrio and David S Goyer had a hell of a task.

But did they pull it off? Yes and no. There's a lot that works well, but there's plenty that doesn't, and the bulk of its failures are in the plotting and tone. It's obvious that Snyder, Terrio and Goyer are well aware of the pitfalls, and do their best to avoid them, but in doing so they create entirely new problems. Worried about an *Age Of Ultron*-style overstuffed clip show? So are they, but what we get instead is a film that works so hard to stay grounded and coherent that it forgets to be fun.

'Not much fun' is an obvious stick to beat the film with after *Man Of Steel*;

it's quite clear that fun isn't really what it's going for. Snyder is aiming squarely for Eighties dark, violent, unapologetic Batman, with his Superman somewhat unsuccessfully folded into that tone.

The Dark Knight Returns has been a key text for each filmmaker who takes on the World's Greatest Detective, so it's not surprising to see it heavily referenced here, but we get a grab-bag of *Batman* and *Superman* greatest hits: Miller, Moore, Millar and even Morrison. It's a pick 'n' mix that doesn't work for both. Furious Batman works, and Affleck has a ball with it, but an already slightly sidelined Superman who's feeling very judged is less successful, despite Cavill's best efforts.

It's hard to shake the feeling that Snyder is more excited about Bats than Supes, particularly as the film opens with the Thomas and Martha Wayne shooting and the discovery of the future Bat-Cave, before launching into Bruce witnessing the destruction of Metropolis. It's a strong opening, and a great reminder of how potent those moments of Bruce's history are on screen, and the sequence of him racing into the heart of the carnage to do what he can is undeniably powerful. Not only does it drive home the human cost of Superman's battle with Zod, it shows just how perfect a choice Affleck was for this.



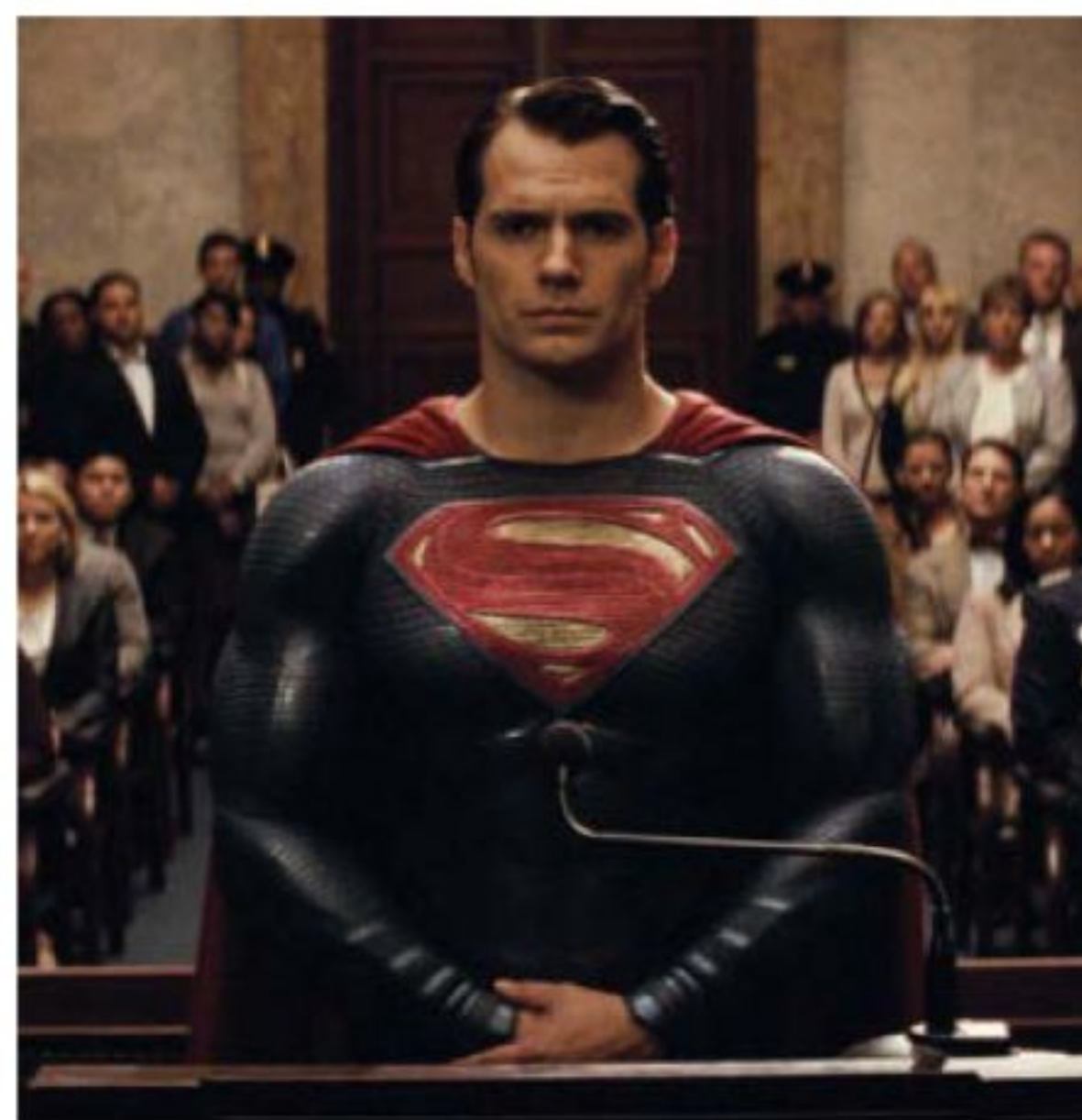
Gal Gadot shines as Wonder Woman in the closing scenes.



Jesse Eisenberg is on brilliantly sinister form as Lex Luthor.



A far too common sight sadly: Lois Lane being rescued.



This Batman is a much older, jaded Dark Knight than we've previously seen.

What it also does is set up the debate about the big Boy Scout, which occupies the bulk of the rest of the film. Bruce is convinced that Superman's a threat, while the American government wants to put restrictions on him. Meanwhile, brilliant billionaire Lex Luthor (Jesse Eisenberg) wants to create a 'silver bullet' deterrent that could take him down if necessary. Naturally, Lex being Lex, he's got his eye on that Kryptonian tech as well.

The plot strand that sounds the least compelling is the one that is most over-served. The film is so determined to keep us grounded in the nearly real reality of *Man Of Steel* that it feels afraid of the capital CB Comic Book stuff it's going to have to put in. So we're given senate hearings, burning Superman effigies and Batman branding his victims. The gloominess isn't a surprise, but it is surprisingly grim, with some moments feeling like they should have been left in the R-rated director's cut. While this may work in the film's first half, it actually does the opposite of what it was intended to do when the shit really hits the fan and the film's monstrous big bad emerges. It's jarring, while the very brief obligatory nods to the Justice League feel like a pen-slip, or at best a reluctant box-tick.

But for all that, there are definitely places where *Batman V Superman* succeeds. As mentioned, Affleck is great casting, showing how Bruce could have found himself in

this dark place while selling the action completely. We love a good villain, and Eisenberg's Lex Luthor is a swaggering, twitching joy. His casting had its critics, but he's a great choice, his hipster tees and cheerful manner masking a callous disregard for everyone around him and a totally ruthless nature. It's a performance that is comic book enough to be entertaining, but dangerous enough to fit the tone.

Crucially, the Batman fight sequences are excellent, and those coming out for the titular smack-down won't leave disappointed. This desire to root everything in reality means that we have to wait while they're both pushed to the point of Not Backing Down, but it's brutal and bruising stuff. Snyder knows how to make mythic combat look cool, and only the most cynical moviegoer could claim to not feel a rush of excitement as they go toe to toe.

That's also true of Wonder Woman's appearance when it finally arrives. Gadot only appears periodically throughout the film, establishing Diana Prince as someone who knows a lot more about the grander scheme of things than Bruce Wayne (there's a nice scene where she stops him mansplaining an ancient sword in a museum), but she really shines in the film's

final action sequence and it's a powerful reminder of how freaking overdue this is.

The film's other women don't fare as well, sadly, with Amy Adams' Lois Lane repeatedly requiring rescue in service of the plot, and another character that would be spoiler-y to mention getting some rough treatment. They don't exactly get the best dialogue either. Hmm.

If you're getting the impression that the film is a mixed bag, you're exactly right. How much you get out of it will depend on what you're hoping to get. The action's good, the cast is great, and the first half manages to keep all its balls in the air. But it's oddly sluggish in places, too self-serious and overstuffed to be nimble, and there's a lot that could have been cut. We didn't even talk about the terrible dream sequences. It is intermittently rewarding, but ultimately a bit disappointing.

Jonathan Hatfull



SciFiNow scored **5** for
**Batman V Superman:
 Dawn Of Justice**

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OR STAY IN AND WATCH...



Batman Begins
 The most underrated of the Nolan trilogy manages to be both a gritty reinvention and a comic-book movie.



WHAT'S IN THE DIRECTOR'S CUT?

Should we wait for the R-rated version?

When it was announced that an R-rated version of *Batman V Superman* would hit the shelves as a Director's Cut, it seemed safe to assume that it was mostly violence that would be added – a few moments of added brutality to the big title fight. However, it then emerged that Jena Malone's role as (probably) Barbara Gordon had been cut from the theatrical edit, and we're very excited to see her in the role in the longer version. It sounds as though Snyder's cut will be three hours, so we do want to see it.

FILM INFO

Released

Out now

Certificate

12A

Director

Dan Trachtenberg

Screenwriters

Josh Campbell,
Matt Stuecken,
Damien Chazelle

Cast

Mary Elizabeth Winstead,
John Goodman,
John Gallagher Jr

Distributor

Paramount Pictures

Running Time

103 mins



10 CLOVERFIELD LANE



Secrecy is king

JJ Abrams insists that *10 Cloverfield Lane* is a blood relative of 2008's *Cloverfield* but, you know, it isn't *really*. You could argue that they take place in the same universe, but you could also argue that they don't. It doesn't really matter. You definitely don't need to see *Cloverfield* before you see this. You don't even have to have *liked Cloverfield* to see this. *Cloverfield* could be your least favourite film ever, and there would still be a chance that you would adore *10 Cloverfield Lane*.

It's difficult to describe the film's plot without giving anything away (and trust us, you won't want anything to be given away), but here it goes: when a woman wakes up after a car crash chained to a wall in an underground shelter with a man who claims an undeterminable event has killed everyone on the surface and left the world uninhabitable, she has a hard time figuring out if she's been rescued or kidnapped.

Excellent – perhaps even career-best – performances from the very small cast almost make you forget that most of the film is being held up by just three characters. John Goodman's turn as Howard, the on-edge and enigmatic doomsday prepper with a saviour

complex and owner of the bunker from the trailer, is both endlessly entertaining and utterly unsettling. John Gallagher Jr as happy-go-lucky Southerner Emmett is extremely likeable and has a fierce sense of comic timing. Mary Elizabeth Winstead provides a very human way into the film as the heroine, Michelle, a young woman who while trying to run away from a relationship she doesn't want to be in, finds herself trapped in an underground bunker she doesn't want to be in even less.

Together, the trio are a powerhouse. There is no standout because all three are incredible. They pull you in at the start and keep you trapped, almost like they have lured you down into the bunker with them. Everyone starts on the same footing, including the audience; nobody really knows each other when the film kicks off, so the subsequent hour and three quarters are spend trying to figure out if anyone is actually what they claim to be. As secrets are revealed – or rather, as theories about one another are internalised – it just gets weirder and weirder. From start to end, *10 Cloverfield Lane* is tense as hell. There

are quite a few good jump scares along the way, but it's the smaller moments; the moments of suspicion, quiet reveals and revelations that are the most sinister.

Unfortunately, the setup is far better than the resolution. The way the film is wrapped up feels a little rushed and somewhat forced, perhaps in an attempt to tie it into the first *Cloverfield*. There's so much else that could have happened that would have been a more satisfying ending than what we got. It could have been truly groundbreaking. Instead, it's a decent example of franchises ruining things that don't need to be franchised. *10 Cloverfield Lane* would have worked far better as a standalone film, but then of course it wouldn't have had as much power behind its marketing campaign, nor would it have attracted as much of an audience as it needs. It's a vicious circle.

However, fantastic direction from Dan Trachtenberg makes his feature debut one not to be missed. It's claustrophobic, atmospheric, creepy to the extreme, and stays with you for a good while. Everything is utilised to near perfection, from the tight, entertaining script to the soundtrack and the staging. The somewhat weak ending could definitely be overlooked simply because the road to it is so damn brilliant.

Poppy-Jay Palmer

SciFiNow scored **9** for 10 Cloverfield Lane

Follow our scores on **JUST A SCORE**

OR STAY IN AND WATCH...

Right At Your Door
A man barricades himself inside his house in LA when a dirty bomb goes off in this chilling horror.



LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Movies with very specific places in their title

A Nightmare On Elm Street (1984)

Elm Street gets nightmarish when a horribly disfigured serial killer goes on a murder spree and hunts his victims in their dreams in Wes Craven's classic.

Mulholland Drive (2001)

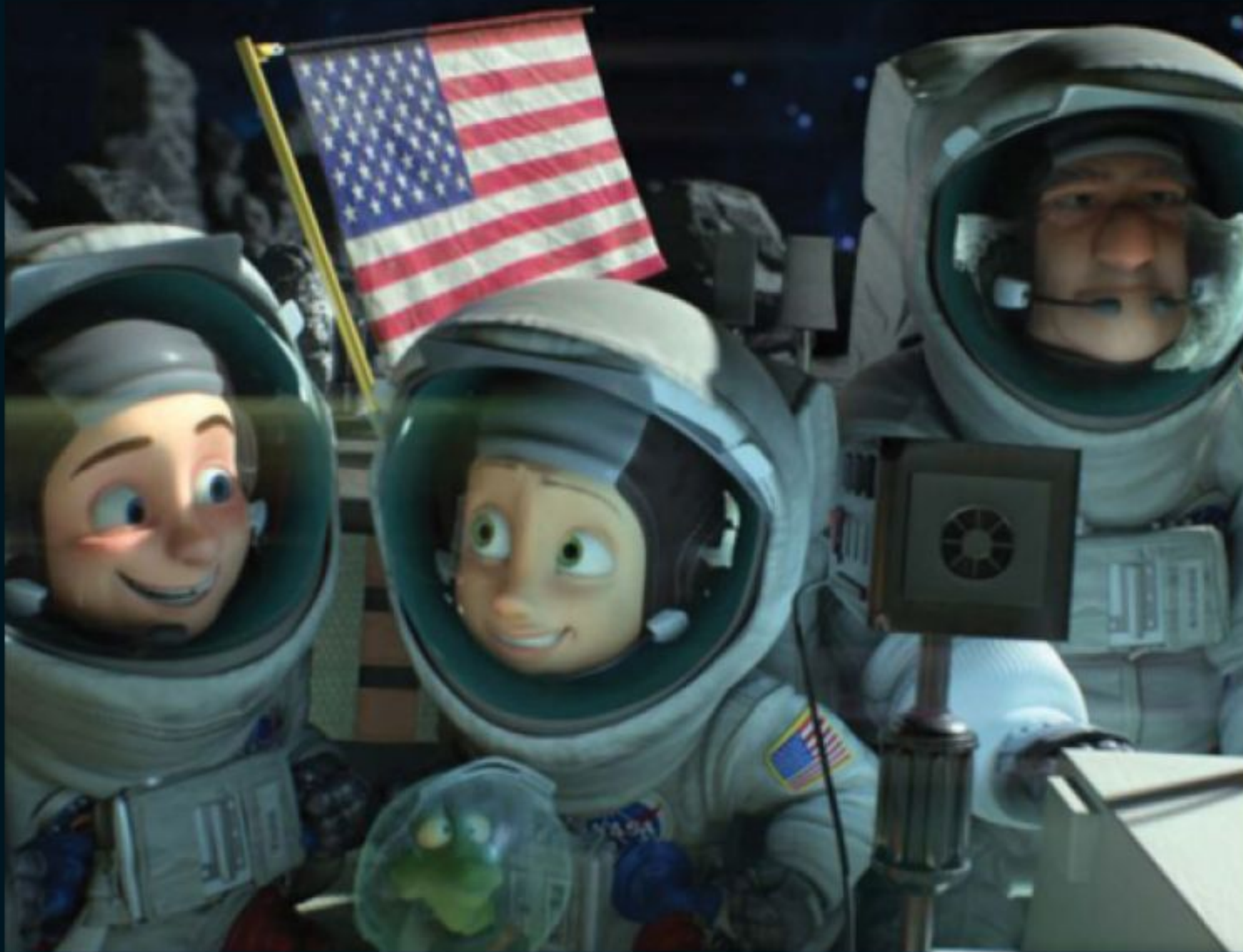
A car crash on Santa Monica's Mulholland Drive and a chance meeting between two women kick-start a load of crazy shit in David Lynch's quiet thriller.

The House At The End Of The Street (2012)

When Jennifer Lawrence moves to a new neighbourhood, she soon finds out that a gruesome double murder took place in the house at the end of the street.

Robinson Crusoe On Mars (1964)

When an astronaut's mission to the Red Planet goes a bit pear-shaped, he finds himself fighting for survival. It's literally *Robinson Crusoe*, but on Mars.



CAPTURE THE FLAG

Floundering in Space

Details PG // 94 mins // Out now **Director** Enrique Gato **Screenwriters** Patxi Amezcua, Jordi Gasull, Neil Landau, Javier Lopez Barreira **Cast** Dani Rovira, Michelle Jenner, Carme Calvell **Distributor** Paramount



Aside from the aspirational female characters, including an American president and the first teenage girl on the moon,

Capture The Flag offers little more than a run of the mill animated family space adventure. Its message regarding colonisation and the treacherous acts committed in its name is simply bizarre and absolutely confusing by the end of the film, but there's lots of shiny stuff, loud music ('Cotton Eye Joe' for one) and a sweet story about the importance of family in between to keep small children amused.

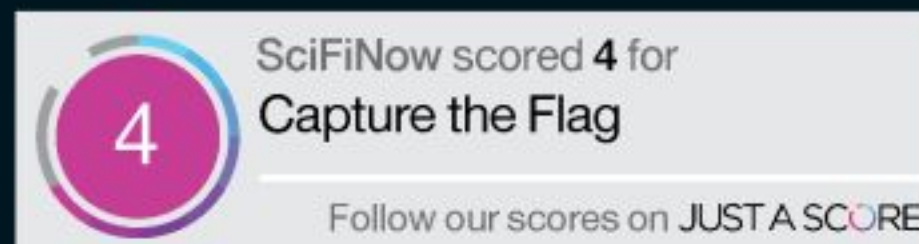
When egotistical billionaire and oil tycoon Richard Carson announces the moon landing was faked (with a cheeky nod to Stanley Kubrick) and that he intends to launch a rocket into space to claim the land, NASA spring into action to try and beat him using Apollo XI and a group of veteran astronauts to train up a new team. However, due to dastardly tricks by Carson, the NASA vehicle takes off unexpectedly early with two children, a lizard and an elderly astronaut aboard.

High points usually involve scenes featuring Igor the lizard who appears with all types of fantastic gadgets attached to him thanks to his young

and boisterous bespectacled owner, who gets a weirdly judged moment involving a skin rag. Thankfully though, the writers are respectful to the older characters, with a lovely cross-generational thread pulling the story together. There are a few fun facts thrown in to educate the younger audience about the Apollo missions, and the animated rockets are particularly detailed, with the design of the modern rocket proving to be eye-catching.

Capture The Flag lands on the saccharine side for the most part, with the exciting adventure saved for the latter half. The basic humour means there's not much to laugh at apart from the preposterous ending, though there is a cool DIY training montage involving the young aspiring astronauts. There is an inkling of a better film here, but something appears to have got lost in translation, making this quite the forgettable voyage.

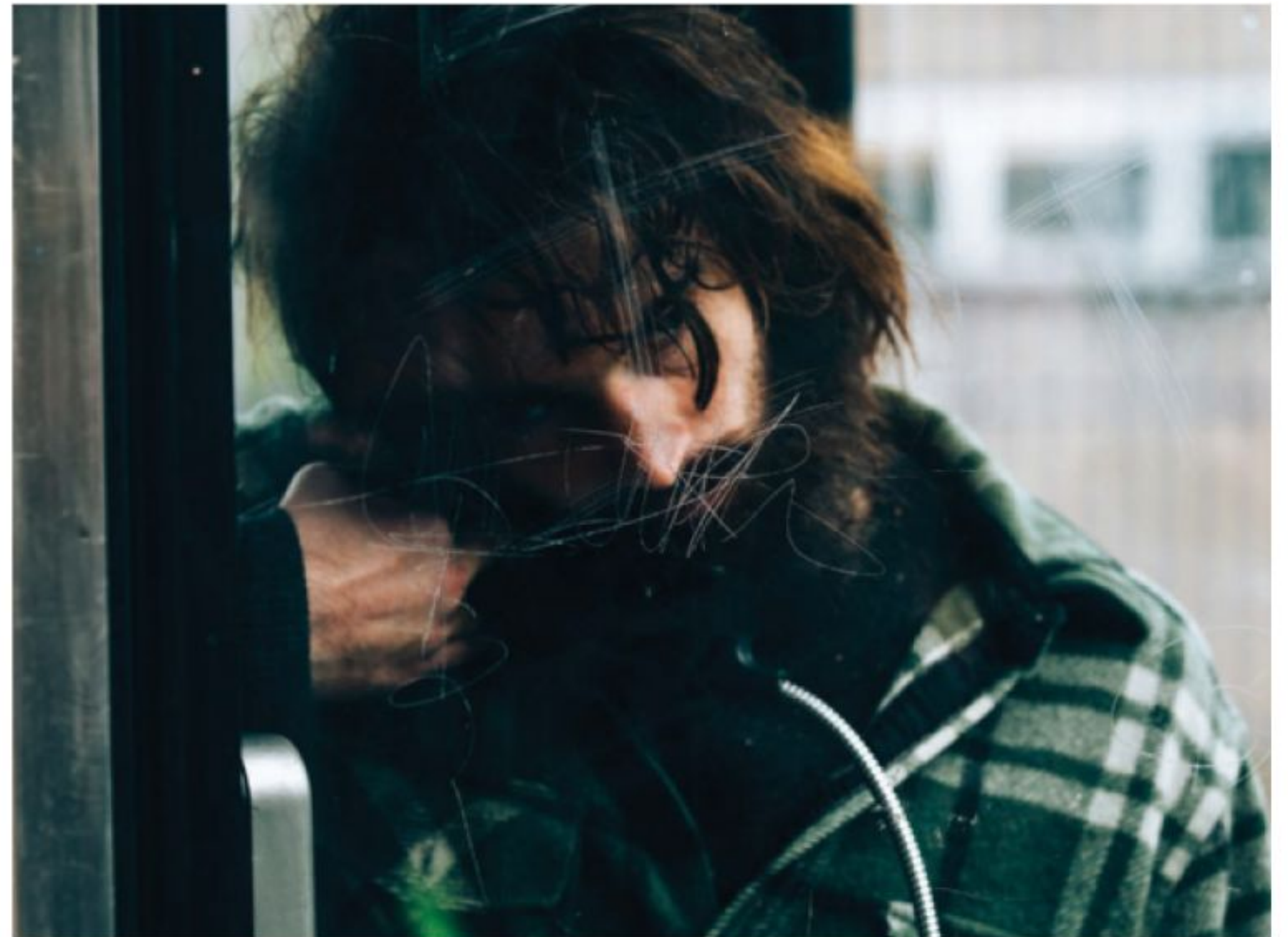
Katherine McLaughlin



OR STAY IN AND WATCH...



SpaceCamp
A group of kids attending a NASA summer camp are accidentally launched into outer space.



REMAINDER

This is your life

Details 15 TBC // 97 mins // 27 May **Director** Omer Fast **Screenwriter** Omer Fast **Cast** Tom Sturridge, Arsher Ali, Cush Jumbo, Ed Speleers **Distributor** Soda Pictures



Time is something of an abstract concept in Omer Fast's adaptation of Tom McCarthy's novel, in which a man with

seemingly endless resources will strive to create the perfect sequence of events.

Tom (Tom Sturridge) is walking into the street when a falling piece of machinery hits him on the head. When he finally wakes from his coma, he's given £8.5 million to keep quiet about it, but as he keeps saying, he can't remember anything anyway. Confronted with fragments of memories and friends who may or not be who they say they are, Tom uses his fortune to create something he can control.

With the help of Naz (Arsher Ali), a creative and committed fixer, Tom buys a block of flats, which he fills with actors, all given very specific instructions regarding movement, speech and actions. Will this crystallise the memories Tom seems so desperate to find? Or will his spiralling mental state undo everything?

Fast's film is self-consciously chilly, deliberately keeping Tom at a distance, not just from the people who claim to

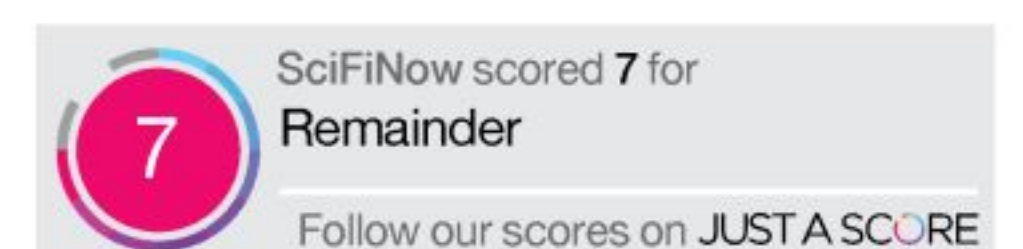
be his friends, but from the audience as well.

Beyond his unwavering commitment to this project, we only get glimpses of the man inside. He's cold and unreasonable, occasionally to excellent comedic effect, and although there's clearly something tragic and broken in him, Fast has no interest in giving us an easy way to connect with this character. Sturridge is well-cast, his good looks and soft voice slipping easily into cruelty, while Ali is excellent as his right hand, who suppresses his confusion but not his growing fascination.

It's slow to get going, and during the film's first 20 minutes or so the lack of connection makes it difficult to engage with. However, once the film introduces Naz and his uncanny ability to make things happen, the tone starts to fit with the nature of what we're watching. As his goals become increasingly lofty, there's an element of Lynchian unreality to go with the Cronenbergian iciness.

It's hard to see this film finding a particularly wide audience, but those who find themselves on Fast's wavelength will find a lot to admire. It will certainly stick with you.

Jonathan Hatfull



OR STAY IN AND WATCH...



Spider
Ralph Fiennes is superb as a broken man trying to make sense of his past in David Cronenberg's thriller.

FILM INFO

Released

Out now

Certificate

12A

Director

Robert Schwentke

Screenwriters

Noah Oppenheim, Adam

Cooper, Bill Collage

Cast

Shailene Woodley, Theo

James, Miles Teller,

Ansel Elgort, Naomi Watts,

Jeff Daniels

Distributor

Lionsgate

Running Time

121 mins



THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT

Prior warning

When we last saw Tris Prior (Shailene Woodley), she had just revealed the existence of the human race beyond the wall surrounding her post-apocalyptic Chicago, but a happy ending was too much to ask for.

Evelyn (Naomi Watts) is the new leader of Chicago following the overthrow of Jeanine in *Insurgent*, but her regime is no better than the one before. It's up to Tris, Four (Theo James), reluctant ally Peter (Miles Teller) and her traitor brother Caleb (Ansel Elgort) to break out of Chicago and see what's beyond the wall. The answer is predictably grim: a war-ravaged but super-advanced society, overseen by Jeff Daniels in benevolent dictator mode.

The third film in the series is much the same as what came before – an exploration of the corrupting nature of power and control in an industrial-punk society in which advanced holographic technology is achievable, but soft furnishings are not.

The main difference here is that Tris is no longer the always-right pariah of goodness – here, she gets a taste of flattery and power and, like all the characters in the series, reacts poorly. It's up to Four, usually sidelined, to do the lion's share of the heroics. He carries the bulk of the middle portion of the movie, and most of the major twists are revealed through his eyes. James is a capable and likeable action movie lead, but he lacks Woodley's capacity for empathy. Without her centre-stage, the film loses the emotional impact it might have had.

Elsewhere, the cast are sparingly used. Elgort, who in another franchise would be the action-heavy lead, is surprisingly good as the

cowardly Caleb, constantly apologising for his uselessness while navigating the bumpy path of redemption. Teller continues to be classier than the movie deserves, as does Watts as the increasingly conflicted Evelyn. Other characters are sidelined so much that sometimes the film forgets they're there (why else would any film willingly underuse Octavia Spencer?).

The film looks great, and it creates two stunning new worlds – the radioactive Martian landscape outside of the wall, and the utopian, high-tech societies it holds. Evelyn's factionless domain is a triumph of production design, with scraps of wallpaper from the old Chicago still clinging to ruined walls. Unfortunately, the set is full of characters who seem to have wandered in from *The Matrix Reloaded's* rave scene.

There are some great action sequences, especially the thrilling escape from Chicago and the introduction of some honest-to-goodness sci-fi flying ships, some of which seem to owe a debt to the good ship *Serenity*. The special effects are classy, and an improvement on the often weightless *Insurgent*. The film also benefits from the fact that for once, none of it takes place in the characters' minds. Despite that, none of them manage to achieve any real sense of danger, even though the film diverts dramatically from the plot of the book.

Like many YA adapts, the *Divergent* series is turning the final book into

two films. As a result, the climax feels temporary and false, and leaves you in no doubt of a quick resolution just in time for everyone to team up for the big finale – which we won't see until the next film.

The *Divergent* series has always lacked the emotional or thematic impact of some other recent YA films. *The Hunger Games* had more interesting things to say about class and power, and while *Allegiant* introduces some big ideas about whether you need to be 'pure' to be whole, it ultimately doesn't fix any of the problems that the earlier films had.

Abigail Chandler



SciFiNow scored **6** for
The Divergent Series: Allegiant

Follow our scores on [JUST A SCORE](#)

OR STAY IN AND WATCH...



The Hunger Games
Despite the influx of pretenders, this YA thriller is infinitely superior to most and part of its own revolution.



HELLO? WHERE ARE YOU?

Which actors are most shamelessly underused?

Miles Teller? Sassy but scarce.

Octavia Spencer? Possibly took another acting job half way through filming, because she just vanishes.

Maggie Q? Will she ever get the screen time she deserves?

Jeff Daniels? Decent bloke to evil in the space of six scenes.

Ray Stevenson? How much did they pay him for one scene?

Zoë Kravitz? A more believable action heroine than Woodley, which probably explains it.

Daniel Dae Kim? He may have forgotten that he was in the film and just stopped showing up.

Mekhi Phifer? Remember when he was a Next Big Thing? *Allegiant* doesn't.

Shailene Woodley? It's her own damn film, and somehow she's *still* underused.

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25-27 February

Where

Glasgow Film Theatre,
Glasgow

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Website

www.frightfest.co.uk

FILMS

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Hexecutioners // Anguish //
Pandemic // The Mind's Eye
// Patchwork // The Wave
// Southbound // The Other
Side Of The Door // Baskin //
Martyrs // The Devil's Candy



FILM4 FRIGHTFEST 2016

FrightFest's Scottish event is a weekend packed with horrors in the cosy Glasgow Film Theatre. It's always a damn good time, and this year was no different

The festival kicked off with Jason Zada's *The Forest*, in which Natalie Dormer heads to Japan to find her twin, who has gone missing in the notorious Aokigahara Forest.

It all feels like a throwback to the po-faced J-horror remakes of ten years ago. Dormer commits to her twin characters, but she's hindered by some ropey dialogue and a plot that requires her to ignore common sense at every step.

Friday started with the audience-dividing *The Hexecutioners*, a wilfully odd stew of a film that throws two corporate euthanisers into some Lucio Fulci madness in a Shirley Jackson house. The film's jump from black comedy to something more bizarre might throw some viewers, but it's creepy, funny, stylish and smarter than it looks.

Also taking an unexpected sharp turn was dour possession tale *Anguish*, in which troubled teen Tess (Ryan Simpkins) struggles to distinguish between what's really there and the voices in her head. The twist undercuts some of the tension, but it deserves praise for committing to being more sensitive than shocking, and Simpkins is excellent.

It was certainly more sensitive than John Suits' first-person POV zombie movie *Pandemic*. *Continuum*'s Rachel Nichols is a CDC doctor whose small team must go into an LA overrun with infected to retrieve

survivors. There are some quite intense sequences, but it's too much of a mish-mash of videogame and B-movie references, and lacks an identity of its own.

Thankfully, *The Mind's Eye* was much more fun; a 1990-set throwback revenge horror about telekinetics who must escape from a maniacal doctor. It's a sincere homage, filled with big performances, bigger exploding-head effects and all the trappings of a midnight movie discovery. The excellent cast is on message, and we had a brilliant time.

The good times kept coming with Tyler MacIntyre's sweet-natured debut *Patchwork*, in which three young women find themselves murdered, reanimated and sewn together into a single body. We were won over by the strong performances and its amiable approach to body horror. It consistently refuses to turn seedy or unpleasant, offering a cheerful blend of *Monty Python* and *Re-Animator*, and Corey Sorenson's mad scientist is an absolute delight.

Things kicked off bright and early on Saturday morning with Roar Uthaug's *The Wave*. The Norwegian disaster movie was the biggest film of the year in its home country, and the director of *Cold Prey* does make the most of his stunning location, but it follows the natural disaster movie



The *Martyrs* remake didn't win many fans.



Hell comes to Earth in the brutal *Baskin*.

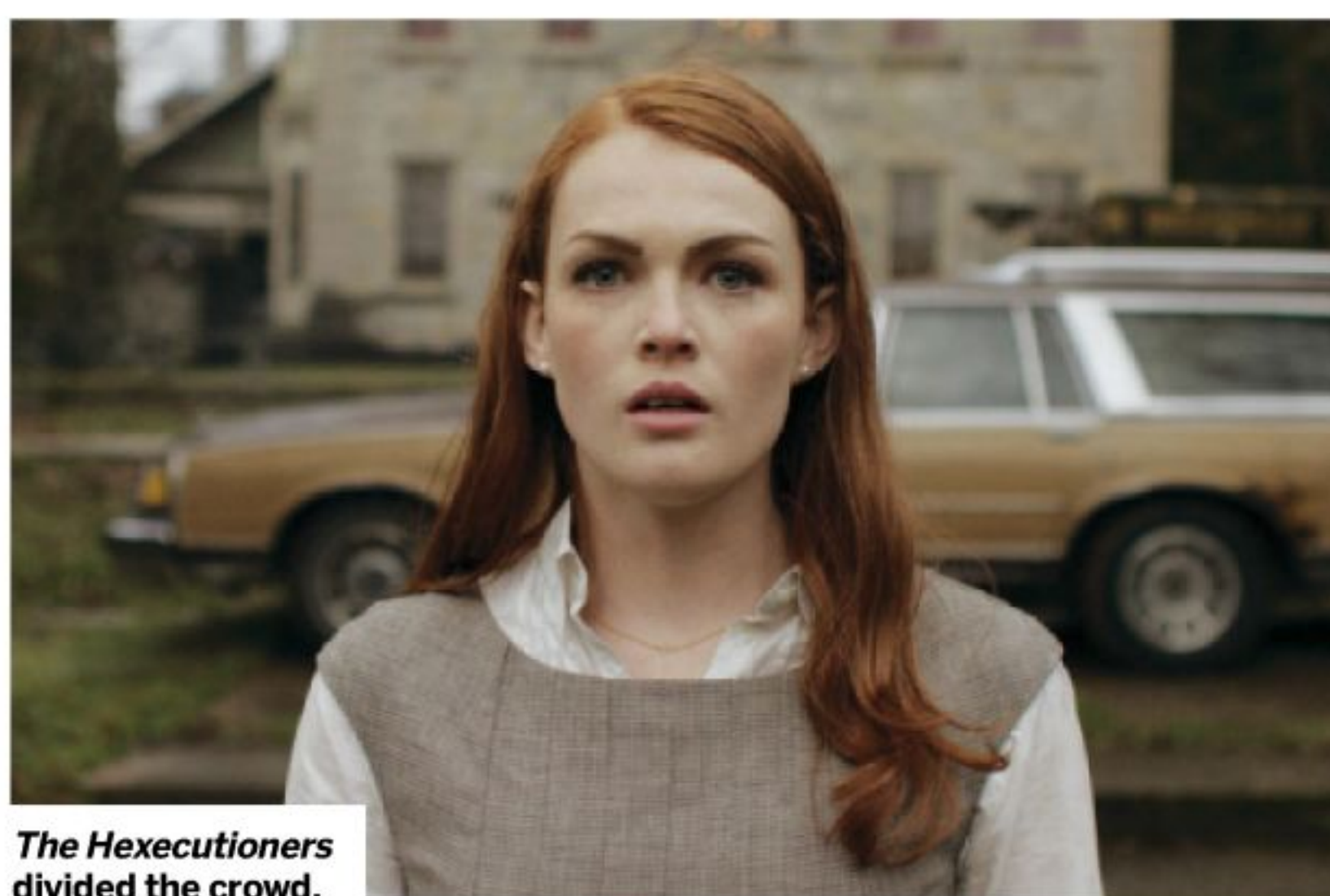


Patchwork was an funny, gory surprise.

The Devil's Candy haunts Ethan Embry.



Telekinesis ain't easy in *The Mind's Eye*.



The Hexexecutioners divided the crowd.

playbook step by step. Still, the wave itself was excellent.

Southbound was our favourite of the fest, the much-hyped anthology horror tying five stories together as strangers running from their guilt collide on a stretch of desert highway that isn't all it appears to be. It's refreshing to see this stretch of America mined for horror that doesn't immediately recall *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, instead going for the David Wong-esque soured Americana with madness, devils and tentacles lurking underneath the surface. For an anthology it's remarkably consistent, and the stories drift between darkly funny and straight-up nightmarish with great skill. It also provoked the biggest "Oh god, that's disgusting" reaction from this reviewer all weekend.

Johannes Roberts' *The Other Side Of The Door* stars Sarah Wayne Callies as a grieving mother living in India with her family, who is told about a temple where she can talk to her dead son. She just can't open the door. The setup is shop-worn, but Roberts makes the most of his setting, and is backed up by a good cast. A strong performance from Callies and Roberts' assured direction makes for a solid ghost story.

Next up was the much-anticipated *Baskin*, a barking mad and atmospheric

horror in which a van full of Turkish cops answers a distress call in the middle of nowhere, but find much more than they'd bargained for. There's plenty of shocking moments of twisted gore, but for all the moments that we'd feel uncomfortable discussing in an office environment, *Baskin* succeeds because of its atmosphere and skin-crawling sense of dread. It's not flawless, but it is bloody memorable.

It's fair to say that the knives were out for Kevin and Michael Goetz's remake of Pascal Laugier's modern classic *Martyrs*, and although we did our best to keep an open mind, we did not emerge as fans. The setup is exactly the same, to the point where we started wondering what the point of it all was, but then Mark L Smith's screenplay takes us in a different direction. It deserves some kudos for trying something different, but it can't quite pull it off.

The festival wrapped up with *The Devil's Candy* from *The Loved Ones*' writer-director Sean Byrne. Artist Jesse (Ethan Embry) and his family move into a beautiful new home that has an unfortunate history and a dangerous former occupant (Pruitt Taylor Vince) desperate to return.

Byrne finds the absurd and the mundane in the terrifying, and the horror in no way suffers from the dark humour. There are points when it seems to be going through

the motions in terms of the plot, but this world is so distinctive and immersive, and the characters are so likeable, that we can't wait to see it again.

And that was it for another year of FrightFest Glasgow! As ever, the atmosphere and crowd were great, and it's just brilliant to see these movies on the big screen with their target audience. We're now slightly dazed and counting the days until we can go back...

Jonathan Hatfull



Natalie Dormer enters *The Forest*.

REVIEWS CINEMA

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YOUR THOUGHTS

We asked you @SciFiNow what your favourite moments were



"And that's exactly how you end Glasgow FrightFest! *The Devil's Candy* was exactly what I wanted! #TheDevilsCandy" @veganluke



"Divided views out of Glasgow #FrightFest, but *Baskin* is a truly visceral experience. Hallucinatory & shuddering. @canevrenol is a visionary." @scoutthehorizon



"Really enjoyed #Southbound *The Accident* was the stand out segment for myself." @ScotsHorrorGuy



"Loved *The Devil's Candy*. Makes the Top 3 with *The Mind's Eye* & *Patchwork*. Special mention for *The Wave*." @22NeilMitchell



"*The Mind's Eye* was very silly, but in a good way. Heaps of head-explodey fun in the spirit of *The Fury* & *Scanners*. #FrightFest #gff16" @johnlees927

THE HEXECUTIONERS 7 THE WAVE 5 MARTYRS 2 BASKIN 7 THE DEVIL'S CANDY 8 THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR 6



CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON: SWORD OF DESTINY

Kicking and screaming

Details 12 // 103 mins // 2016 // **NETFLIX** // **Released** Out now **Director** Woo-ping Yuen
Cast Michelle Yeoh, Donnie Yen, Harry Shum Jr, Natasha Liu Bordizzo
Distributor Netflix



Ever since the end of the first *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, warrior Yu Shu Lien (Michelle Yeoh) has been living in solitude, but a new cause of commotion in Peking turns out to be all it takes to tempt her out of retirement. The legendary sword of Li Mu Bai, the Green Destiny, arrives at the city, and Shu Lien is eager to protect it.

Obviously, *Sword Of Destiny* isn't as good as the original *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. It would have been extremely difficult to match that given how brilliant it is. But it's not all that bad either, as so many feared. It just doesn't possess the spirit or excitement that made the first one so wonderful.

Sword Of Destiny feels like a completely different film. The reason for this is simple: it *is* a completely different film. For starters, original director Ang Lee had nothing to do with it. It's also in an entirely different language, seeing as Netflix decided that everyone should be speaking English, presumably to make it more accessible for its worldwide

audience. Also, Yeoh aside, none of the original cast is the same. Granted, a lot of their characters are now dead, but the brilliant Zhang Ziyi was only willing to reprise her role as warrior Jen Yu if Lee was directing.

It's disheartening that we never get to find out how Jen Yu and the other big players have been occupying themselves since Shu Lien left for retirement, but a large cast of new characters keep things interesting, including masked horseman Wei Fang (Harry Shum Jr), a protector of the House of Te, Meng Sizhao (Donnie Yen), and a promising young fighter named Snow Vase (Natasha Liu Bordizzo), who becomes eager to train under Shu Lien.

The best thing about *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* was always the dreamlike fight sequences, and thankfully *Sword Of Destiny* does at least keep those. They are just as exciting and mesmerising as they were back in 2000, or perhaps even more so. But between those scenes (of which there are many), the story just isn't as captivating as it needs to be.

Poppy-Jay Palmer

SciFiNow scored **6** for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: Sword Of Destiny*
Follow our scores on [JUST A SCORE](#)

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...



The Forbidden Kingdom
A kung-fu movie fan gets to roll with his heroes when a relic sends him back in time.

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA: THE MOVIE

Space capers

Details PG // 124 mins // 1978 // **DVD** // **Released** Out now **Directors** Richard A Colla, Alan J Levi **Cast** Richard Hatch, Dirk Benedict **Distributor** Universal Pictures UK



The human race is in danger of extinction in *Battlestar Galactica's* fledgling adventure, and it's up to Apollo, Starbuck and the rest of the crew to help preserve their species.

A lot of marvellous and complex world building happens in just over two hours, and it's easy to see how this one story inspired a franchise. After all, the film is just the first three episodes of the original series

mushed together, but it doesn't flow very well as a result. It feels disjointed, like three acts from three extremely different plays have been brought together to make a very strange, completely new one.

As far as genre is concerned, *Battlestar Galactica* is a mess. It's a space opera, it's a romance, it's a road-trip movie, and it's a political thriller – name a genre, and it's probably in there somewhere. The outcome isn't unwatchable, though. It goes from tragedy to farce at light speed, but it's entertaining. In the 38 years since its initial release, it's aged better than some sci-fi classics, but not as well as others.

Poppy-Jay Palmer



SciFiNow scored **5** for *Battlestar Galactica: The Movie*
Follow our scores on [JUST A SCORE](#)

THE CITY OF LOST CHILDREN

Off-shore dream stealing

Details 15 // 112 mins // 1995 // **DVD** // **Released** Out now **Directors** Jean-Pierre Jeunet, Marc Caro **Cast** Ron Perlman, Dominique Pinon, Daniel Emilfork, Judith Vittet **Distributor** Studiocanal



Jeunet and Caro's second film together has always suffered in comparison to their debut, *Delicatessen*, but repeat viewings continue to reveal more and more reasons to love it.

Sideshow strongman One (Ron Perlman) teams up with resourceful street urchin Miette (Judith Vittet, excellent) to rescue his little brother from the clutches of the evil Krank (Daniel Emilfork), who lives on an

oil rig and steals the dreams of children to stay young. In among all this are a pair of sinister conjoined twins called The Octopus, a cult that forces its members to use robot eyes, mind-controlling poison fleas, and Dominique Pinon as a multitude of clones.

It's a beautifully designed film, the sets are incredible, and the characters are brilliant creations (it's no wonder Terry Gilliam loved it), but there is a real heart to it that (mostly) keeps it from becoming an overtly eccentric oddity.

This Blu-ray restoration is glorious, and it's a pleasure to return to a world this vivid and detailed.

Jonathan Hatfull



SciFiNow scored **8** for *The City Of Lost Children*
Follow our scores on [JUST A SCORE](#)

MAN VS

Survival instinct

Details 15 // 87 mins // 2015 // **DVD** // **Released** Out now **Director** Adam Massey
Cast Chris Diamantopoulos, Drew Nelson, Kate Ziegler **Distributor** Metrodome



Things start to go horribly wrong when TV presenter Doug Woods (Chris Diamantopoulos)

ventures out alone into the Ontario wilderness to film his survival cable show 'Man Vs', and it quickly starts to look like he's not the only one out there.

The setup in *Man Vs* feels a bit forced, but once Doug gets into the forest and the elements, amongst other things, start to fight back, it turns into truly fantastic viewing.

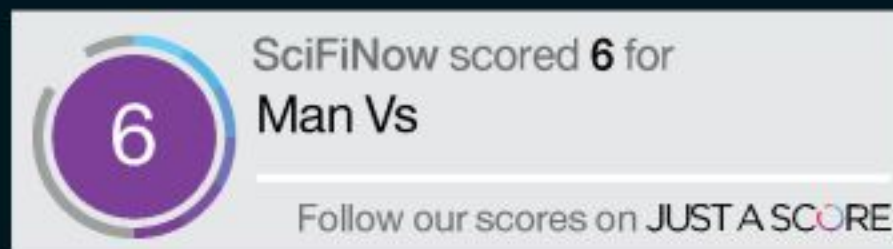
Diamantopoulos has the two-faced TV presenter act down to a T, continuously switching from sunny and positive for the camera and pissed off and bitter for the cutting room floor.

Director Adam Massey has mastered the delicate balance of silence and sinister sound effects help build up a powerful sense of

suspense and terror that becomes fully unsettling.

However, everything that was constructed over the first hour of the film all comes crashing back down with the Big Reveal. It seems melodramatic to suggest that the film's ending could ruin everything that came before it, but it really does. You're better off turning it off and making up your own ending.

Poppy-Jay Palmer



THE HALLOW

If you go down to the woods today...

Details 15 // 97 mins // 2015 // **DVD** // **Released** Out now **Director** Corin Hardy
Cast Joseph Mawle, Bojana Novakovic, Michael McElhatton **Distributor** Entertainment One



Essentially, The Hallow

is a tale of two films: the first being a tense home-invasion horror in which young couple Adam (Joseph Mawle) and Claire (Bojana Novakovic) ignore the warnings of the superstitious locals until it's too late, and the second an unexpected body-transformation horror.

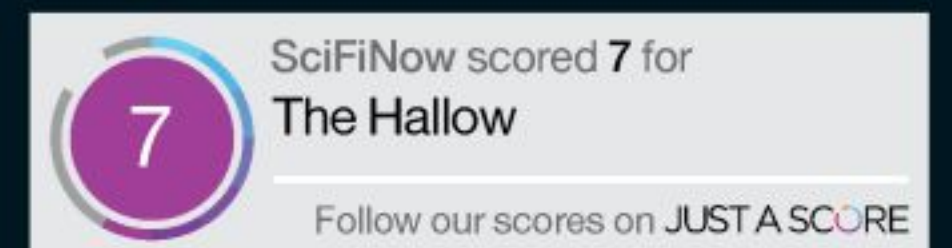
Ultimately, the former is far better than the latter. The couple's actions are understandable, as the locals aren't exactly diplomatic in

voicing their concerns, and with a young child to look after, the sense of dread is pervasive. Irish folklore is a rich mine for horror elements, and bringing these to fore only serves to make the result all the richer.

However, where *The Hallow* falters is in revealing its hand too early, with the reveal of the family's tormentors proving to be one of the most anti-climatic scenes of the year, and things only going downhill from there.

It picks up for a suitably frenetic finale, but it just makes you wish that if only it had stuck to its guns and finished as it had so brilliantly begun.

Steve Wright



IT! THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE

Creature comforts

Details 12 // 69 mins // 1958 // **Released** 25 April **Director** Edward L Cahn
Cast Marshall Thompson, Shirley Patterson, Kim Spalding **Distributor** 101 Films



After Colonel Edward

Carruthers (Marshall Thompson) becomes the sole survivor of a mission to Mars, he suddenly finds

himself suspected of murdering his crewmates for their rations. In order to prove himself innocent and avoid a death sentence, Carruthers must return to the Red Planet and find the thing that killed them.

It! The Terror From Beyond Space's very small budget announces itself from the first scene and continues to be hard to miss for the duration of the film, but that's part of its charm. The special effects are about as unspecial as you can get, and the monster itself looks like a unfinished *Blue Peter* craft project, but it doesn't matter. Like most monster movies of decades past, it's alluring, exciting and very likeable.

As well as being shoddy, it's also extremely claustrophobic owing to its

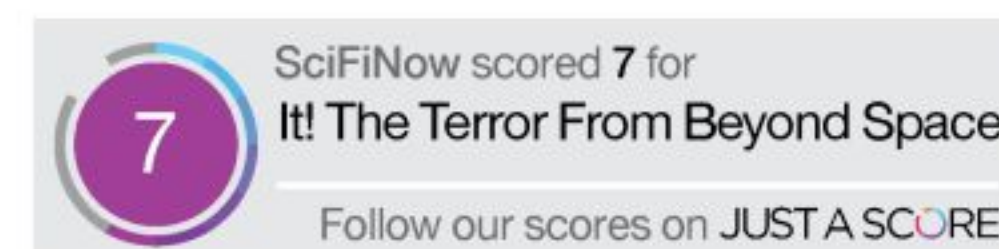
spaceship setting, and a marvellous use of light and darkness as well as an sparse but atmospheric score make for a tension-filled viewing experience. Performances from the cast are mediocre and all of the characters are very underdeveloped (what with the film being just over an hour long), but it's still remarkably easy to feel uneasy over each of their fates, as well as what lurks in the shadows. *It!* relies on the rule of less is more when it comes to revealing the monster, and it pays off.

When you line it up with some of the greatest and most loved old school monster movies like *Nosferatu*, *Frankenstein* and *Creature From The Black Lagoon*, *It!* tends to be overshadowed. It doesn't even come close in terms of entertainment value and how memorable it is (or isn't). But it has definitely made an impact in terms of its influence; there's no way the *Alien* series would have been made without



inspiration from *It*. And then, of course, you have all the films, TV series and books that spawned from the influence of *Alien*. *It! The Terror From Beyond Space's* legacy is still going strong.

Poppy-Jay Palmer



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...



Curse Of The Faceless Man

Schlock god Cahn directs this ode to crushed skulls, faceless men and Pompeii.





BASKET CASE TRILOGY

Brothers stick together

Details 18 // 259 mins // 1982/1990/1991 // **Released** Out now
Director Frank Henenlotter **Cast** Kevin Van Hentenryck, Terri Susan Smith, Beverly Bonner **Distributor** Second Sight



No matter how many times you've seen Frank Henenlotter's 1982 schlock horror *Basket Case*, it's always a bit of a shock

to rediscover just how charming it is. The low budget is obviously evident, but more apparent is the filmmaker's ingenuity, energy and eye for the weird.

Over the course of the trilogy, he would phase out the horror to focus on the freaks, creating a franchise that starts as a slightly grubby slasher and ends as *Nightbreed*'s cheerier cousin.

In the first film, sweet-natured Duane Bradley (Kevin Van Hentenryck) arrives in New York with a basket under his arm, a few bucks in his pocket, and a bloodstained medical file. He's looking for the doctors who separated him from his monstrous conjoined twin Belial, who is very much alive, angry, and waiting in the basket to be unleashed.

It threatens to fall into so-bad-it's-good territory, but some great set pieces and a self-aware sense of humour ensure that there's fun to be had beyond the self-satisfied chuckles of an ironic watch, and Belial is a strong character in his own right. It's a strange hybrid of creature feature and grimy Eighties New York horrors, although one or two moments, leaning towards the latter, feel like a director going for shock value.

Both sequels, released a year apart nearly a decade later, firmly land on the

comedy side of comedy horror, and on the side of the monsters. These films find Duane and Belial arguing among themselves as they fight to protect the kindly Granny Ruth (the wonderful Annie Ross) and her refuge for people like them from journalists who want to expose them (*Basket Case 2*), then the local law enforcement who are after the bounty on Belial, not to mention his new children (*Basket Case 3: The Progeny*). They're both patchy, daft and giddily preaching to the niche audience choir, but undeniably likeable.

The trilogy may not reach the classic status of some of Henenlotter's contemporaries, but it shows that his cult standing is well deserved. Now, where's our copy of *Frankenhooker*?

Jonathan Hatfull

SciFiNow scored 6 for **Basket Case 1**
 Follow our scores on JUST A SCORE

SciFiNow scored 5 for **Basket Case 2**
 Follow our scores on JUST A SCORE

SciFiNow scored 5 for **Basket Case 3: The Progeny**
 Follow our scores on JUST A SCORE

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...



Street Trash
 Cheap booze is liquefying homeless people in Jim Muro's goopy classic from 1987.

JERUZALEM

Hell comes to the holy city

Details 15 // 94 mins // 2015 // **DVD** // **Released** Out now **Directors** Doron Paz, Yoav Paz **Cast** Danielle Jadelyn, Yael Grobglas **Distributor** Matchbox Films



Just when you think that you're done with found footage, someone throws some great monsters and an amazing location at you and you have to reconsider your position.

Doron and Yoav Paz's *Jeruzalem* starts off on familiar territory, as beautiful young Americans Sarah (Danielle Jadelyn) and Rachel (Yael Grobglas) head off on holiday to Tel Aviv, Israel, before being convinced by a handsome archaeologist that they should travel to Jerusalem instead. This is their downfall.



The movie feels as though it's prepping us for another 'terrible things happen to Americans when they leave America' story, but it takes a sharp left turn. The found footage, too, is given a fresh spin through Sarah's not-Google Glass, which gives her dad the chance to call at unfortunate moments and tells her 'fatal error' when she falls.

There's some smart social commentary too, as our protagonists are all in the exact same amount of peril, regardless of religion or nationality. It's definitely not without its faults (some of the dialogue clunks, and not all of the performances are great), but this is fun, gripping, ambitious and intelligent and it certainly marks the directors as a duo to watch.

Jonathan Hatfull

SciFiNow scored 7 for **Jeruzalem**
 Follow our scores on JUST A SCORE

SCREAM PARK

Low-budget retro ride

Details 18 // 85 mins // 2014 // **DVD** // **Released** 25 April **Director** Cary Hill **Cast** Doug Bradley, Wendy Wygant, Steve Rudzinski **Distributor** Left Films



As far as settings for slasher movies go, a crumbling amusement park is a pretty good idea, so it's definitely for the best that Cary Hill's debut, *Scream Park*, makes the most of its location. Fright Land is on its last legs due to declining ticket sales, so the jaded young staff decide to celebrate with a few drinks. Unfortunately, there are a couple of masked uninvited guests...

Hill is obviously a big fan of low-budget Eighties slashers, and that

affection is really quite endearing for the film's first half. He's got a good eye for visuals despite the obvious budgetary limitations, and there are a few of good performances here. In particular, final-girl-standing, Wendy Wygant, and weedy manager, Steve Rudzinski, are fun.

Scream Park does go off the rails somewhat once the body count rises. There is a nice sense of slacker humour, but it's mostly smothered by the adherence to Eighties rules (boobs, redneck villains, one black character who, obviously, dies first).

It's not without its charms, but it needs an identity of its own beyond its location. Still, it's nice to see Doug Bradley cameo.

Jonathan Hatfull

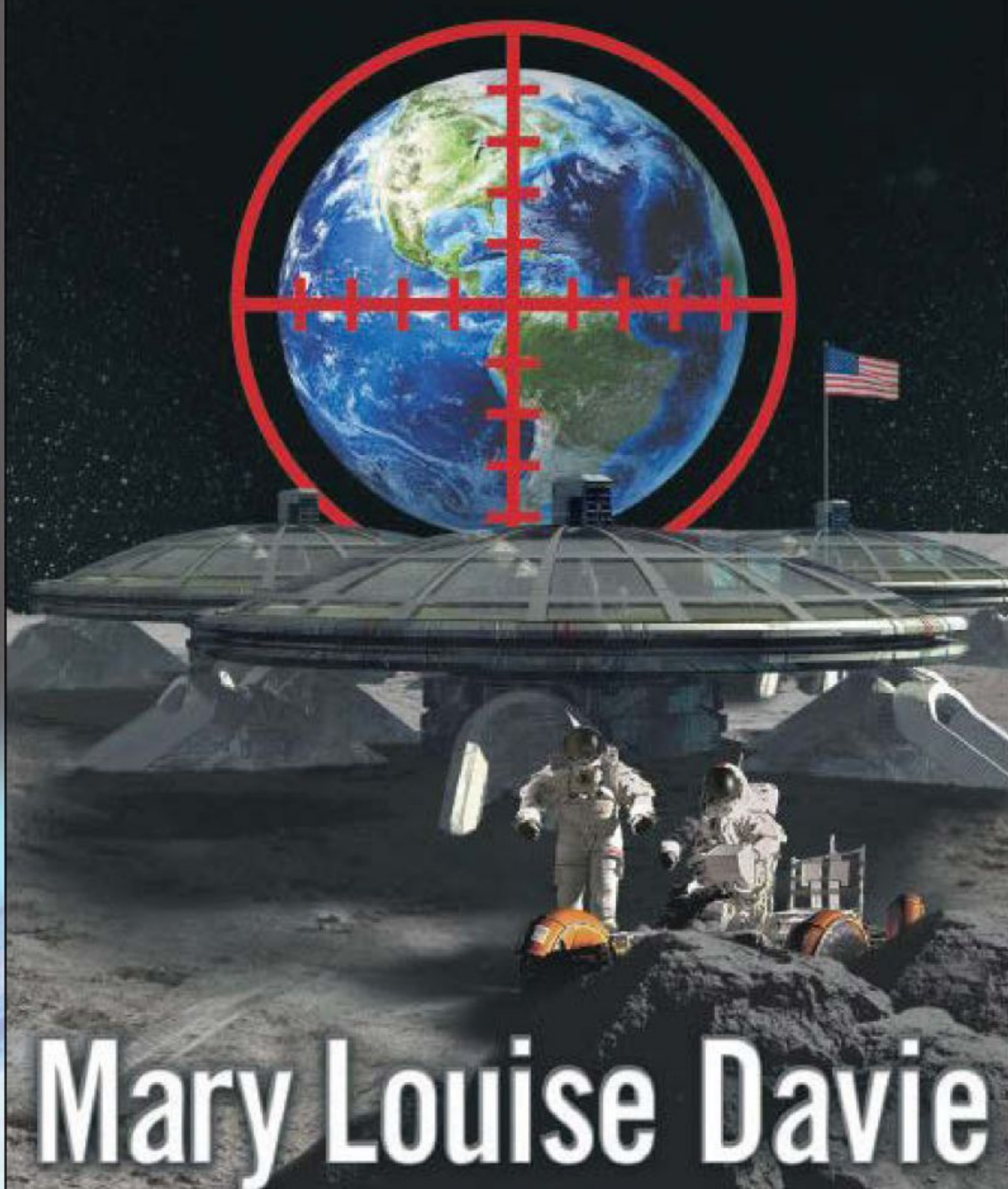
SciFiNow scored 5 for **Scream Park**
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TARGET EARTH

You Only See What You Want To



When two aliens landed in DC, President Harker started to salivate at all the technological advancements he would bring to his country. AND then he met the aliens, Ishmael & Rudy, as they wanted to be called.

They came for Earth's technology, or so it appeared and so the president believed.

The aliens were humanoid, or so their suits showed, they didn't speak English but quickly learned it, or so it appeared.

Danielle Marama, Danny, was assigned by the President to act as the alien's liaison. As she got to know them she became their friend and kept their secrets – was she a traitor?

While Danny and the aliens take to the roads to visit various technologically advanced planets, not wanting to give the aliens the technology so called 'maniacs' come out from everywhere – is the government guiding them to kill the aliens AND Danny?

An explosion in space, a spacecraft coming seemingly out of nowhere – the government deems Danny an alien collaborator – choosing the wrong species to back...although if she were for the government she'd be dead already.

Earth is in the cross hairs. Danny and her husband Chris, an astrophysicist, are Earth's only chance.

OUT IN PRINT THIS SUMMER

from Brighton Publishing and author Mary Louise Davie

www.MaryLouiseDavie.com

Out now in e-book (available everywhere good e-books are sold!)



Series One

LUCKY MAN

One for the true believers?

Details 15 // 600 mins // **DVD** // Out now **Creators** Stan Lee, Neil Biswas **Cast** James Nesbitt, Amara Karan, Eve Best, Sienna Guillory, Steven Mackintosh, Darren Boyd **Distributor** Universal Pictures UK



Surely it's impossible not to be impressed by Stan Lee. Even after all this time and all the iconic characters he's had a

hand in creating, he's still trying new things, with *Lucky Man* representing his latest project. It follows the trials of down-on-his-luck everyman Harry Clayton (James Nesbitt) as his life is transformed by a mysterious luck-endowing bracelet.

Beyond the premise, the Stan Lee traits seem to grind to a halt. While his heroes are largely selfless and righteous, Harry is a flawed individual: not a bad guy by any means, but his problems are as much of his own doing as they are a by-product of misfortune. Moreover, this doesn't exactly feel like it has the fingerprints of a comic-book legend all over it. While you get the impression that a budding superhero would have immediately gone out on a spending spree that he'd have later expressed regret for in an Uncle Ben-esque outpouring of grief, here Harry instead uses it to aid his investigations into a series of crimes, aided by his protégé Suri (Amara Karan) and disapproving boss Winter (Steven Mackintosh).

Beyond the description, *Lucky Man* struggles to find a real identity for itself, juggling various subplots while it decides what kind of show it wants to be. Harry's attempts to discover the

truth behind the bracelet regularly gets sidetracked by the crime-of-the-week filler that's going on, and Sienna Guillory's mysterious Eve skips in and out of the plot. Sure, she's meant to be enigmatic, but it would have been nice to have some sort of handle on her for narrative's sake. In short, less is more would have been much better approach.

For all its faults though, *Lucky Man* definitely isn't predictable, and its characters far more complex than is usually the case in your average crime dramas. The standout is obviously Nesbitt, who elevates proceedings by virtue of simply being there, and Mackintosh and Karan are similarly excellent value. Also worth mentioning is the cinematography – for the first time in a while, the London skyline is put to good use, giving the capital the on-screen gravitas that such a glorious backdrop deserves.

So *Lucky Man* has its faults, but not for want of ambition. If a second series is confirmed then we look forward to seeing where it's headed.

Steve Wright



SciFiNow scored **6** for *Lucky Man: Series One*

Follow our scores on **JUST A SCORE**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...



Jekyll
For more Nesbitt, check out this brilliant modern retelling of RL Stevenson's Gothic horror classic.



Event Series

THE X-FILES

Mulder, it's me

Details 15 // 270 mins // **DVD** // 13 June **Creator** Chris Carter **Cast** David Duchovny, Gillian Anderson, Mitch Pileggi, Joel McHale **Distributor** Fox



It can be difficult to compartmentalise nostalgia in these situations. Few series have impacted our consciousness as much as *The X-Files*. While it always pays to be wary of returns and their potential to be diminished, we couldn't – and didn't want to – wait for the new revival series.

For the most part, Chris Carter's update doesn't punish us for our love. The reassembled writers included some of the show's best, and Darin Morgan, Glen Morgan and James Wong deliver episodes that remind us of how good it can be. David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson's chemistry is still a joy, and the latter powers through some of the less successful episodes purely by the force of her acting.

But what about those less successful episodes? Well, they're the ones that deal with the plot. With just a six-episode miniseries to work with, Carter decided to spread the main storyline over the first and the last. Mulder and Scully are approached by a right-wing talk show host (Joel McHale, who works better than you might expect), rejoin the FBI and uncover another far-reaching, huge conspiracy. As much fun as it is to see Mulder rattle off wild theories, there's no denying

that it's rushed, and in the case of the final episode, kind of awful.

But we're willing to overlook that for the sake of what's great about this revival. Darin Morgan's 'Mulder & Scully Meet The Were-Monster' is so good that it justifies the show's return purely by itself, a hilarious and self-referential hour of TV with excellent guest stars that manages to poke fun at Mulder while reminding us why we love him. Duchovny clearly thinks it's the best of the bunch too, but he has always visibly perked up for Morgan's episodes.

The other non-plot episodes are quite hit and miss, but mostly manage to combine fun monster antics with some surprisingly effective emotional moments, and show that there's a real effort to keep the characters growing. Nostalgia may have powered us through the worst of it, but there's some genuinely excellent stuff too. We're anxiously awaiting news of its return.

Jonathan Hatfull



SciFiNow scored **7** for *The X-Files: Event Series*

Follow our scores on **JUST A SCORE**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...



Fringe
After a shaky start, the supernatural procedural became the best of the many *X-Files* imitators.

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7

3 Official HBO Game Of Thrones Swords Mug

This stylish mug featuring minimalist line drawings of *Game Of Thrones*' greatest weapons like the Valyrian steel, the Oathkeeper and the Forrester greatsword is the only receptacle you'll ever need. Quench your thirst, assert your toughness and let them know you're always up for a fight to the death. Or just a tea-addict...

www.hboshopeco.uk // £17.99

PERFECT FOR: TEA-LOVING
FIGHTERS

4 Felicity Smoak Pop! Television Funko

We have been waiting for a Felicity Smoak Pop! Funko for, like, ever. Imagine our delight when we found out we'd finally be able to act out hers and Oliver's wedding. Complete with tissue wedding dress...

ForbiddenPlanet.co.uk // £11.99

PERFECT FOR: OLICITY
SHIPPERS

7-14

LEGO

DIMENSION

5

Schleich Batman V Superman scenery pack

Now you can act out all of Clark Kent and Bruce Wayne's scenes with Schleich's double scenery pack as part of their Justice League collection! Hours of fun are to be had moving these figures backwards and forwards across a surface. Playtime has never been this extreme. Wonder Woman and Armoured Batman are also available.

Schleich-S.com // £18

PERFECT FOR: DC HEROES

6

Metals Die-Cast Wonder Woman figure

It may have the worst tagline in the world ('Worth the weight!') but this Wonder Woman die-cast is very cool. It even stands up on its own despite the strange torso-to-feet ratio. It doesn't look too much like Gal Gadot, but it's perfect for holding loose papers down.

This from Underground Toys, and available at Toys R Us, Argos and Smyths. Underground-Toys.com // £15

PERFECT FOR: AMAZONIAN LOVERS

7

Game Of Thrones Pop! Funko Dragon Pack

Magical bloodthirsty reptiles don't get any cuter than these little poppets in the Pop! Funko *Game Of Thrones* dragon pack. You can finally follow in Daenerys Targaryen's footsteps with your very own baby dragons. All you need is some faith, trust, and a little bit of pixie dust.

www.hboshopeu.com // £34.99

PERFECT FOR: THE MOTHER OF DRAGONS

8

LEGO Dimensions

LEGO Dimensions just got even more awesome with this new selection of packs. Venture into a new world not like our own with characters from all your favourite films, shows and comics, including *Doctor Who*, Doc Brown from *Back To The Future*, Aquaman, the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man from *Ghostbusters* and more.

Shop.Lego.com // £14.99-£29.99

PERFECT FOR: LEGO GAMERS

Top Game Of Thrones tees

Westeros shirts for every occasion

Game Of Thrones

Make your feelings about Joffrey clear to anyone who cares to look at you.

£15.47



Zelda

Finally! Attire to channel your love of Link and your love of Ned Stark.

£17.63



Spoilers

Beware the night, but most importantly beware the spoilers.

£15.36



Breaking Bad

If Walter White were at King's Landing, no one would make it out alive.

£17.63



Alphabet

Teach your kids to read with this educational *Game Of Thrones* shirt.

£14.93



9

Official Star Wars Stormtrooper Winter Hat

Whether you're marching over the snowy planes of Hoth or the icy fields of Abregado-taki, there's no need to suffer an unpleasant chill. Get this knitted Stormtrooper hat on your ehad. Sure, we're on the verge of summer, but who doesn't love a good *Star Wars*-themed garment? The awesome design makes it almost worth getting heatstroke for.

Numskull.co.uk // £14.99

PERFECT FOR: COLD STAR WARS FANS

ZOMBICIDE: BLACK PLAGUE

Publisher: Cool Mini Or Not/Guillotine Games
// Players: 1-6 // RRP: £79.99

Having broken Kickstarter records (earning \$4,079,204), *Black Plague* is now available to buy in retailers.

The most immediate thing about *Black Plague* is its superb theme. Unlike virtually every other zombie game we can think of, it is set in medieval times, which instantly makes it stand out from its peers. Gameplay wise, it's extremely similar to previous *Zombicide* games, meaning a group of players must all club together to make their way through increasingly difficult scenarios.

The game is split into three phases: the Players' Phase, Zombies' Phase and End Phase. During the Players' Phase, you can take three of nine different actions. They can move, search areas, open doors, reorganise their backpacks, trade with others, participate in combat, use an enchantment, make noise or simply do nothing. Making noise is important, as all the zombies in the game are alerted to sound – the more players in an area, the more noise they make.

1 BOARD

The board is made up of nine double-sided game tiles, allowing for all manner of interesting-looking layouts.

2 ADDITIONAL TOKENS

The exit, doors, objectives, the first player and vault doors make up the rest of the 68 available tokens.

3 FIGURES

The 71 included miniatures are unpainted, but packed with insane detail. They're extremely well-moulded, and up to the quality we expect from Cool Mini Or Not.

4 ZOMBIE SPAWN POINTS

These tokens represent different powers of undead, and are placed throughout the town.

6 NOISE TOKENS

Use these to highlight where zombies will move first. Each player in an area also counts as a noise token.

5 EQUIPMENT CARDS

You'll earn these by scavenging. They include weapons, magic, armour and even apples.

7 SURVIVOR DASHBOARD

This stores your character, shows its experience, wounds and skills, their weapons and armour and what they're carrying in their backpack.

TOP FIVE

MAGIC: THE GATHERING OATH OF THE GATEWATCH



1. THOUGHT-KNOT SEER £20



2. NISSA, VOICE OF ZENDIKAR £18



3. KALTUS, TRAITOR OF GHET £16



4. KOZILEK, THE GREAT DISTORTION £14



5. CHANDRA, FLAMECALLER £12

Zombies can use their phase to move or attack, as most only get a single action (only runners can make two actions). Zombies will always move to the noisiest areas and use line of sight, and will typically take the shortest route to a player. Once all zombies have taken their actions, new zombies spawn. The map shows where spawn zones are situated, and spawn cards reveal how many zombies will appear. Interestingly, as the players climb in levels (which also earn them additional actions) tougher zombies spawn, ensuring that each 60-minute game remains challenging to the very end. The final phase sees the removal of all noise tokens and a new player getting to move first.

While it seems superficially similar, there are lots of new ideas in *Black Plague*. The heroes are all brand new, and include elves and dwarves. The new necromancers can spawn even more zombies for you to deal with, while there's plenty of magic to fling about. *Black Plague* also features secret vaults that can transport you to new locations or hide useful weapons. Add in the ability to use armour and the highly useful new Survivor Dashboard, and *Black Plague* proves to be an excellent addition to any gamer's table.

BEST FOR: EXPERIENCED GAMERS

8 DRAGON BILE

Mix this with a torch or fireball to create a deadly conflagration that will turn nearby zombies to ash.

9 DICE

These are used to resolve combat in *Black Plague*.

10 VAULT ZONE

Hidden places that can be stocked with goodies, or be used as a handy shortcut.

Game Of Thrones: The Trivia Game

Publisher: Fantasy Flight Games // Players: 2+ // RRP: £24.99

First off, this trivia game is only going to be of interest to hardcore *Game Of Thrones* fans. Unlike other games based on licences, this one requires intimate knowledge of the show in question in order to glean any

enjoyment from it. That's the point of it, after all: to know the show the best.

The aim of the game is to control more areas of Westeros than your opponents. Each of the nine locations is made up of seven wedges, and players must use markers to fill them. In each round, the players take it in turn to choose a marker and a location on the board. Small markers require answering one question correctly to place them, medium require two correct answers, and large need three. Answer the required questions correctly, and you can

place your marker, hopefully dominating the area in question. After a set amount of rounds, the player with the most secured locations wins. Essentially, this is *Trivial Pursuit: Game Of Thrones Edition*, wedges and all.

Although there are a few neat gimmicks, including the ability to use resources that will buy you favour cards and the ability to form shaky alliances with other players, this is a pretty basic game that requires specific knowledge of the first four seasons of the TV show. Its limited appeal and small number of questions (1,200) means it's not going to appeal to everyone, but if you're a fan, it's great.

BEST FOR: FANS OF THE TV SHOW



A Game Of Thrones: The Card Game

Publisher: Fantasy Flight Games // Players: 2 // RRP: £11.99

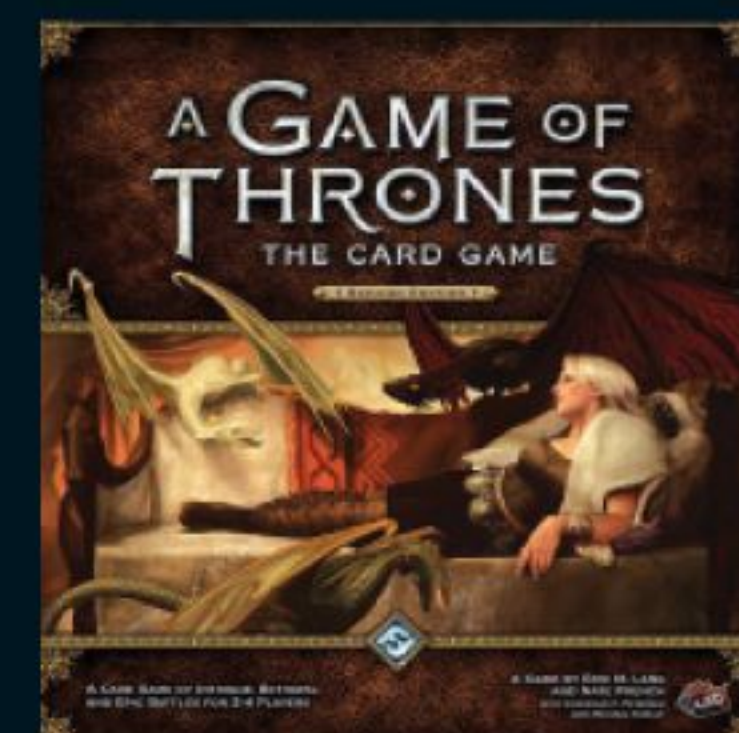
The good news is that this is a greatly refined version of the popular *Living Card Game* by Fantasy Flight Games. The bad news is that it's completely incompatible with the original version. Currently, only two houses are available during play – predictably the Starks and the Lannisters – but more will be added in future sets.

The aim of the game is to amass 15 Power Points before your opponent. Players can also lose by running out of cards, though this is harder to do. Each round of *A Game Of Thrones* consists of seven phases – Plot,

Draw, Marshaling, Challenges, Dominance, Standing and Taxation. Marshaling is important as it allows you to bring heroes into play (providing you can pay the relevant cost) while Challenges are also handy, as it allows you to battle using three techniques: Military, Intrigue or Power.

Needless to say, some characters are better at certain challenges than others, meaning you'll need plenty of strategy to avoid losing those precious Power Points.

This is a solid update from Fantasy Flight thanks to easier-



to-understand rules, better timing mechanics and no past knowledge of the licence in order to enjoy it, although being a fan certainly does help and adds to the overall enjoyment.

BEST FOR: GAME OF THRONES FANS

Expansion Of The Month DESCENT: JOURNEYS IN THE DARK: MANOR OF RAVENS

Publisher: Fantasy Flight Games // Players: 2-5 // RRP: £29.99



Every *Descent* expansion offers excellent value, and *Manor Of Ravens* is no different. It introduces two new characters – Alys Raine and Thaiden Mistpeak – along with

a powerful new lieutenant for the forces of evil and a number of new monsters. The new characters integrate with past sets, and are represented by exquisitely detailed models.

The campaign is a good size, consisting of six adventures spread across two dangerous acts. In addition, there are 16 new map tiles too, which are all backwards compatible with previous adventures. It's a highly entertaining – if rather challenging – campaign.

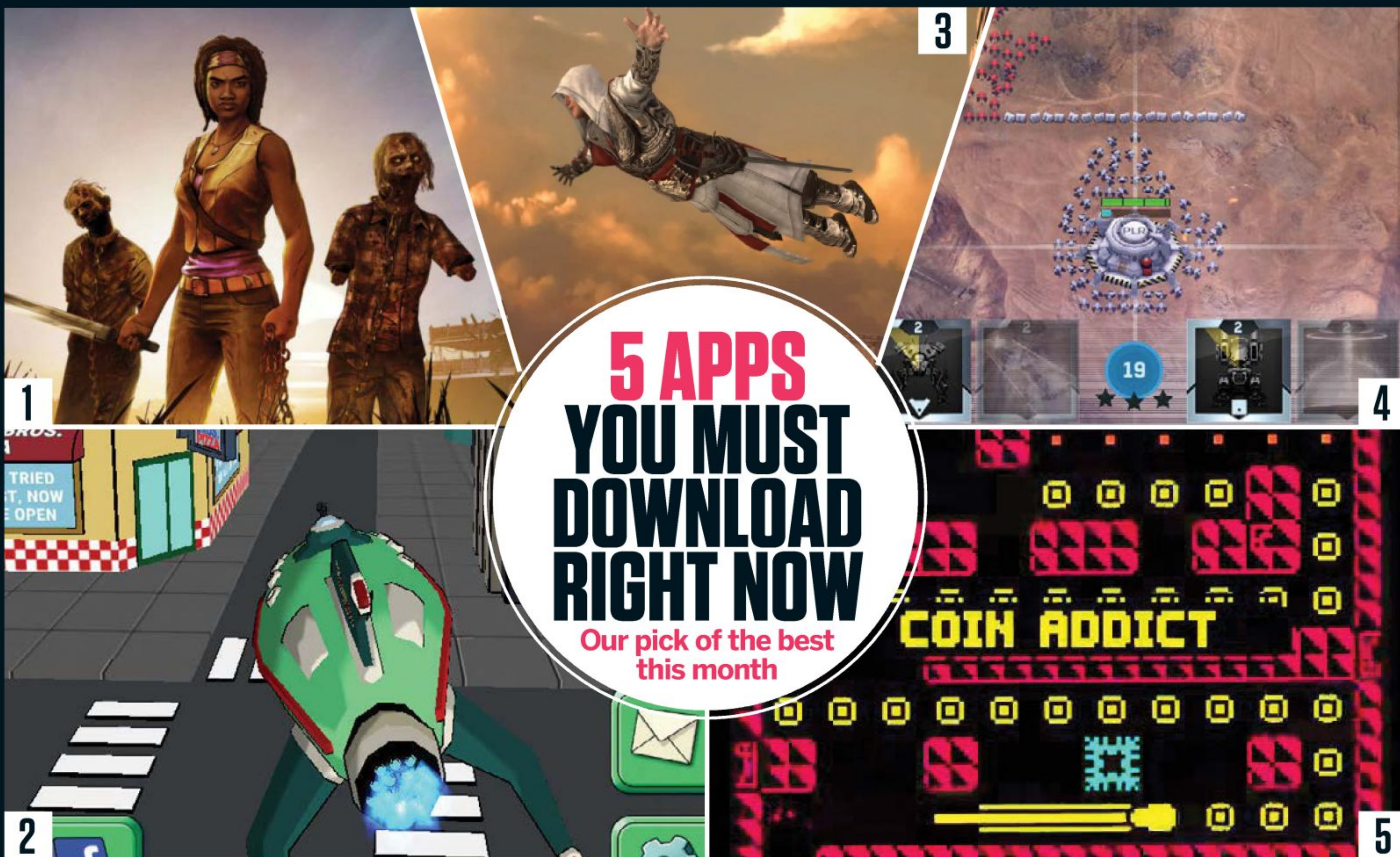
Do You Remember? BATTLE MASTERS

War gaming for beginners

A Games Workshop collaboration with Milton Bradley saw a number of games designed by Stephen Baker, including *Hero Quest* and *Space Crusade*, but here we're focusing on *Battle Masters*, which attempted to take the convoluted rules of Warhammer's tabletop game and make them more manageable for everyday gamers.

Battle Masters was not only notable for its large number of well detailed figures (over 100 in case you're wondering), but also its gigantic playing area, which consisted of a 4.5 feet square vinyl map. Army movement was dictated by combat cards, but it still offered a fair amount of strategy during play. Its creator would go on to design the excellent *Heroscape*.





THE WALKING DEAD: MICHONNE – A TELLTALE MINISERIES

FOR: IOS/ANDROID
PRICE: £3.99/\$4.99



1 Michonne has been the most exciting character in *The Walking Dead* ever since she first appeared. Take up the sword for yourself in this mobile choose-your-own adventure that explores Michonne's history and requires you to make difficult decisions that affect the gameplay. TV fans should note the game follows the comics, so some plot points differ.

BEST FOR: SURVIVALISTS



FUTURAMA: GAME OF DRONES

FOR: IOS/ANDROID
PRICE: FREE



2 Our favourite sci-fi sitcom is back in game form. Help Planet Express deliver parcels throughout the universe by matching up four drones in a row and matching more to unlock power-ups. While we might have preferred something more like *The Simpsons: Tapped Out* than this *Slurm Soda Crush Saga*, this freebie is packed with enough strategy and call-backs to the show to keep us happy.

BEST FOR: PUZZLED PIZZA BOYS



ASSASSIN'S CREED IDENTITY

FOR: IOS
PRICE: £3.99/\$4.99



3 As its name suggests, *Assassin's Creed Identity* is a part of the popular action-adventure series. This mobile entry is the first in the franchise to include role playing, and lets you choose from different characters to play as. *Identity* is also the first mobile version of the game to give you the freedom to explore wherever you like in Renaissance Italy and take on quests.

BEST FOR: RUTHLESS RP-ERS



ROBOCIDE

FOR: IOS/ANDROID
PRICE: FREE



4 Command a legion of robots that fight other, more evil androids in this real-time strategy game about humanity traversing the galaxy, fending off an alien invasion. As well as waging war with the anonymous swarm, you can earn powered-up mechs with unique abilities called Titans and team up with others for multiplayer arenas. To fuel your robot army, you will also have to travel far and wide to harvest resources and customise your fleet.

BEST FOR: SPACE STRATEGISTS



TOMB OF THE MASK

FOR: IOS
PRICE: FREE



5 An homage to Eighties arcade classics that mixes *Indiana Jones* and *Pac-Man*, this game is geared around escaping an ever-unfolding vertical labyrinth. You have to dodge throwing knives, spring-loaded snakes and poisonous puffer fish, but if you stop for more than a few seconds to consider your next move, a wall creeps up behind you, killing you instantly. The frenetic gameplay is equal parts brilliant fun and throw-your-phone-away frustrating.

BEST FOR: RETRO RUNNER FANS



84 Essential Read

Preacher: Gone To Texas



SciFiNow
Book Club

Issue 120's Essential Read:
The Amityville Horror
by Jay Anson

Join in and share your thoughts on
Twitter or Facebook



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88 Beginner's Guide: Early Gothic Horror 90 Book Reviews 96 Joe Abercrombie 98 Graphic Novel Reviews 100 Arcadia

Essential read: **Preacher: Gone To Texas**

Garth Ennis proved what a writer could achieve when not shackled to superhero narratives
WORDS MATTHEW HANDRAHAN

When AMC's *Preacher* television series airs, it will be almost 18 years since the idea of an adaptation was first discussed. The fact that so many people braved the various dead-ends and false starts is testament to its creative daring, uncompromising attitude and the zealous readers who were drawn to both. *Preacher* simply wasn't like other comics.

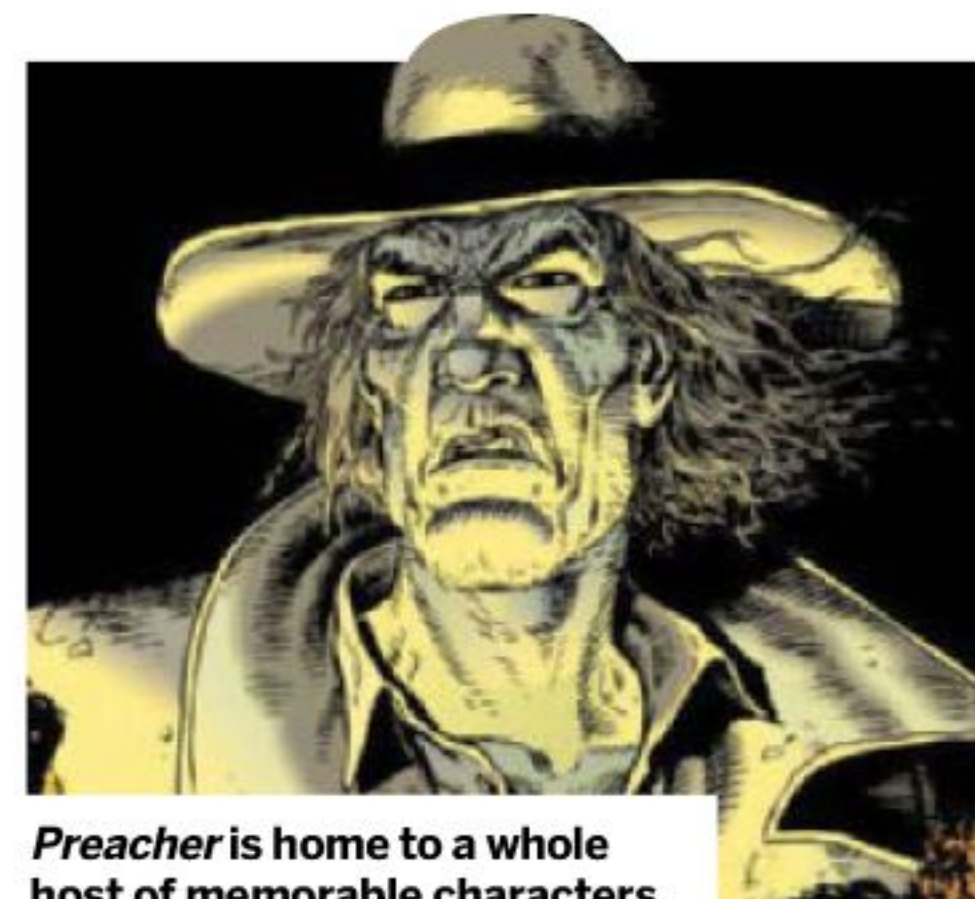
That difference has its roots in the heritage of its author. Garth Ennis was born in the Northern Irish town of Holywood in 1970. Given the religious and political commentary present in *Preacher*, that backdrop was a guiding influence. While the grim reality of 'The Troubles' couldn't be avoided, it had little impact on his daily life. "It was something I grew up on the edge of," he said to *Distraction Pieces*. "People will deal with what's directly in front of their noses, and it's hard to condemn them for that, really. These situations are gargantuan, and the solutions to them seem a million miles away."

Most of the time, the only thing in front of the young Ennis' nose was a comic. Superhero comics imported from the US were a rarity in Ireland, and they were all but impossible to find in Holywood. Ennis sated his appetite with mainstream British comics, starting with the *Beano* and *Dandy*, before moving on to *Battle*, *Warlord*, *Commando* and *2000 AD*. The latter had an impact on Ennis, who often found his father reading the new issue. *2000 AD* was the first time he had contemplated that comics could hold appeal for adults, too.

"British comics of that era, I think, were tougher, funnier, sharper and more varied in subject matter," he told *Pop Mythology*. "There was no 'Marvel Way' approach either, so the art was a lot more interesting – artists could be who they were, rather than shoehorning

their talent into some boring house style. Those were the comics I grew up on and so their influence runs through almost all my work."

Even as a teenager, Ennis was drawn to the human aspect of those comics. While clearly laden with invented characters and fictional elements, they often depicted real events. "There are things that happen out on the most violent edge of human experience that eclipse fiction by their sheer intensity – that you simply could not ever invent," Ennis said to *Unwinnable*. "The many accounts I've read of human experience in wartime reveal degrees of courage, cruelty, cowardice and even kindness



Preacher is home to a whole host of memorable characters.

that are beyond imagination. Next to that, fantasy means almost nothing."

When Ennis says 'fantasy' he is often talking about superheroes. When he gained better and more consistent access to US comics, his initial encounters proved to be ambiguous. First stop: *The Dark Knight Returns*, which he assumed was representative of the deprivation he had suffered. When he bought other superhero books, however, he discovered that Frank Miller was very much an exception.

"Encountering superheroes as an adult without that kind of childhood sentimentality, it just doesn't allow you, or in my case at least, it wouldn't let me take the characters seriously," Ennis said to MTV. Later, speaking to *Pop Mythology*, Ennis recalled his induction into the world of superheroes as an Oz-esque peek behind the curtain. "I dodged a bullet there," he said. "I might ➤



SYNOPSIS

For Jesse Custer, God left the building a long time ago. He didn't find religion; it was pressed upon him during childhood, a period that was about as far away from well-adjusted as it's possible to get. A girl called Tulip gave him a glimpse of the life he wanted, but that ended – badly – right before he was hounded into a new line of work: a preacher in small-town Texas. Five years later, the strain is starting to tell.

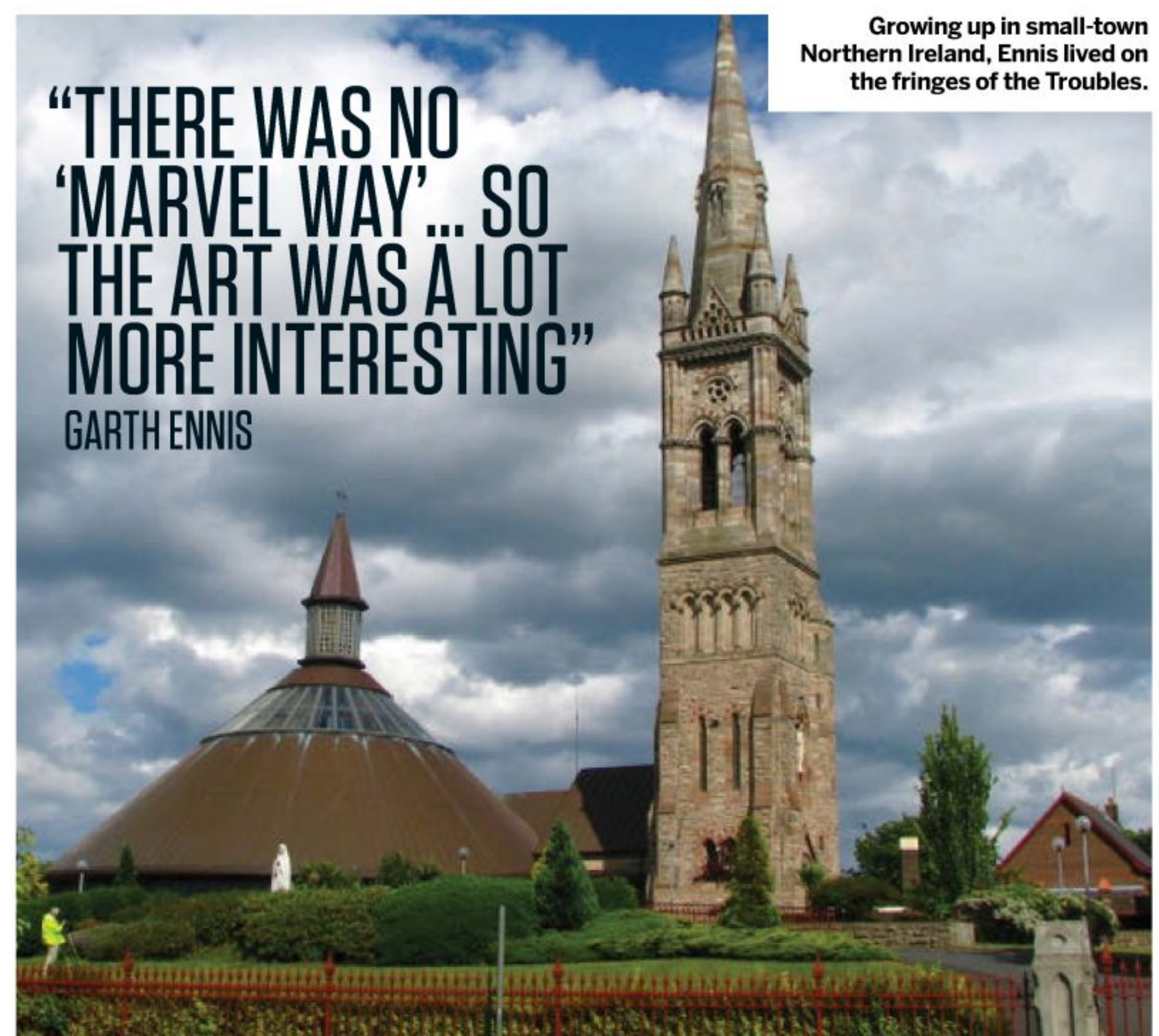
Suddenly, everything changes. Custer's sermon is interrupted by a visitation. His body is invaded by Genesis, a supernatural force that, in the process of flattening the church, the town and its entire population, leaves Custer with the ability to command anyone with his voice – a power known as the 'Word of God'.

Jesse wants answers, and not from the seemingly indestructible gunslinger who turned up, or the Irish vampire riding with his ex-girlfriend. A preacher should be able to turn to God, but Custer soon learns that God hasn't just left the building; God has left heaven itself.

Dominic Cooper will take the lead role in AMC's TV adaptation.



Growing up in small-town Northern Ireland, Ennis lived on the fringes of the Troubles.



"THERE WAS NO 'MARVEL WAY'... SO THE ART WAS A LOT MORE INTERESTING"
GARTH ENNIS



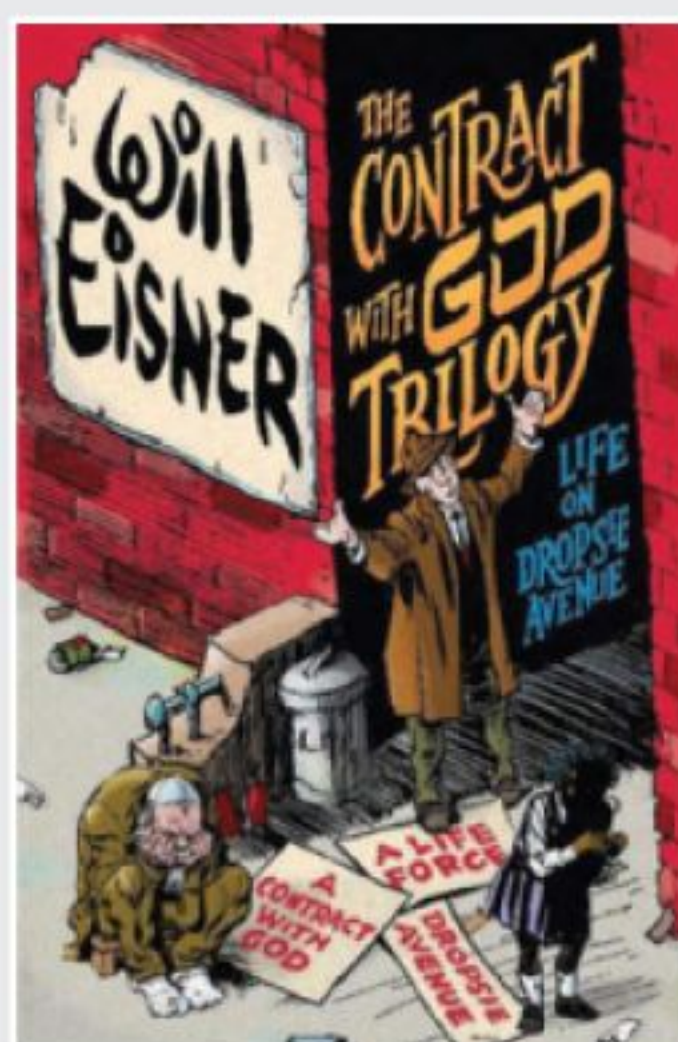
GLEN FABRY '14

Where Have I Seen This Before?

A QUESTIONABLE FUTURE

A CONTRACT WITH GOD ▶

One of the most remarkable things about *Preacher* was its treatment of religion, specifically Christianity and the conception of God. The subject is now less taboo than it was, particularly in the United States, but there's a through line that runs all the way back to Will Eisner's *A Contract With God*. It was a milestone in Eisner's career, and for comics in general, as it is arguably the first modern graphic novel.

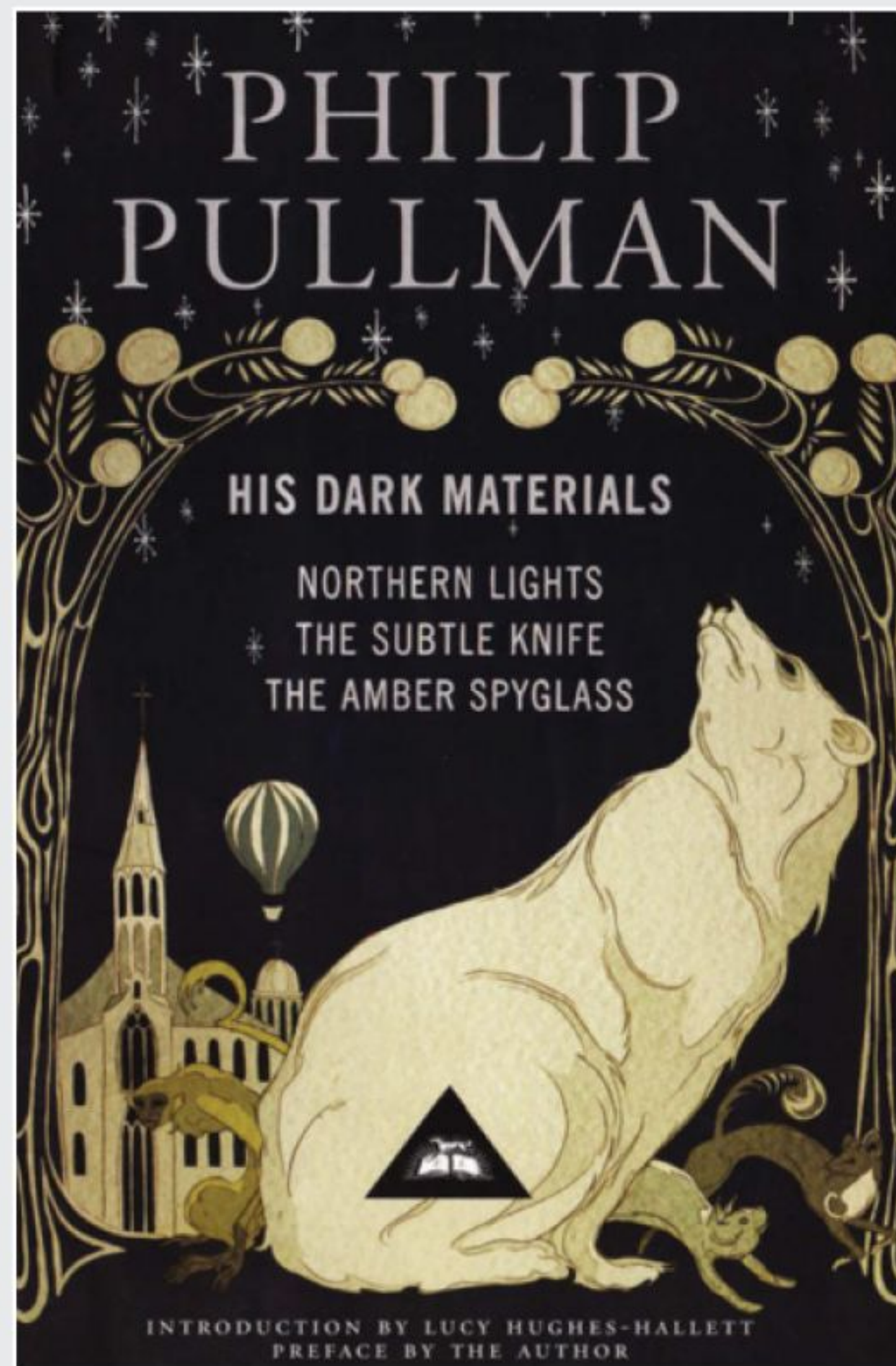
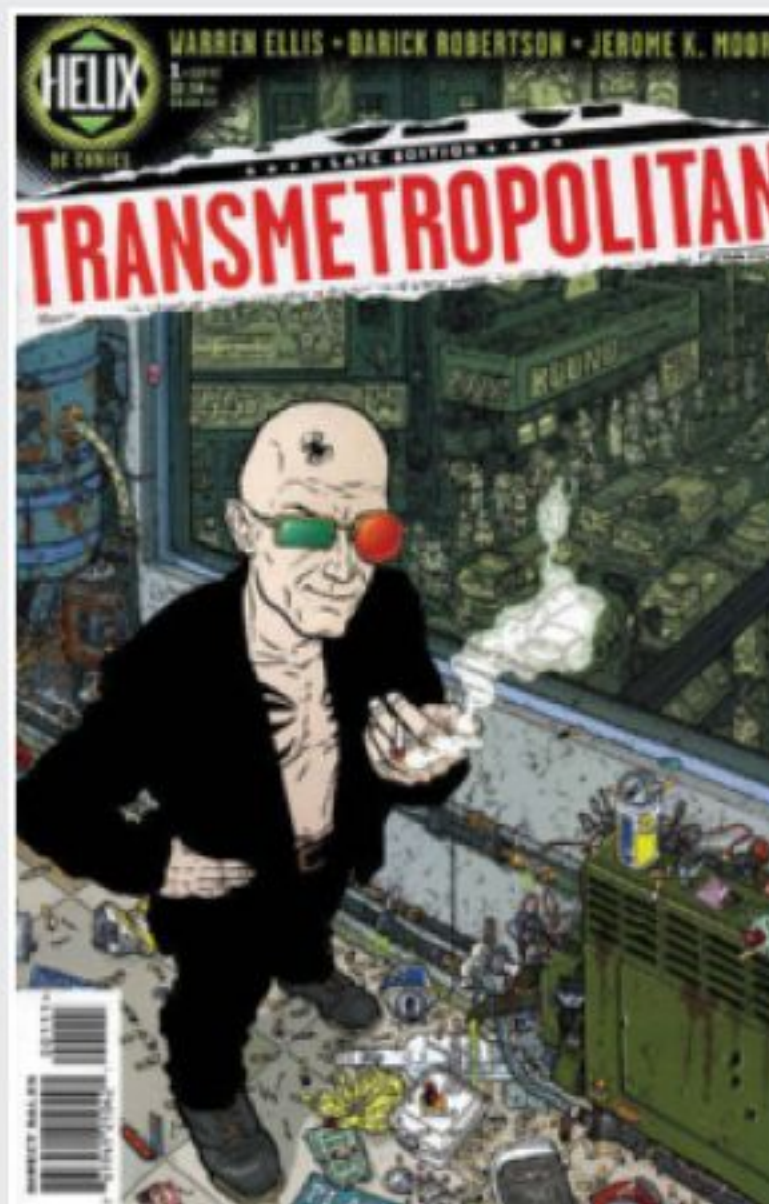


◀ JONAH HEX

While the Western was a staple in comics as far back as the Thirties – in the US, at least – the genre's popularity started to wane in the Sixties across all media. *Jonah Hex* is one of the most recognisable and long-lived Western comics, starting in the early Seventies and more-or-less alive even today, even if he was more successful in the UK than the US. Don't expect any demons or vampires, mind.

TRANSMETROPOLITAN ▶

Warren Ellis' excellent series started two years after *Preacher*, and its exploration of journalism and politics through the eyes of a crazed protagonist, Spider Jerusalem, is entirely distinct. But if you were drawn to Ennis's sparkling dialogue, the clarity of his story, and the near total absence of superheroes, *Transmetropolitan* offers many of the same pleasures. A great next step in Ennis's portfolio for any avid comic reader.



HIS DARK MATERIALS ▶

Ennis is an atheist, and interviewers do tend to ask about his beliefs due to the damning view of religion at the core of *Preacher*'s story. Philip Pullman is another famous atheist, and we know that because of *His Dark Materials*, which is as accessible as *Preacher* and no less scathing.



◀ THE BOYS

Playful reinventions of the superhero myth are now almost as common as those that stick to the formula. Despite Ennis' general antipathy towards comics' favoured subject matter, he found himself drawn to it throughout his career. *The Boys* is arguably the best example, and Ennis attempt to "answer the question: what would superheroes be like in the real world?"

BATTLEFIELDS ▶

Real-world conflict has played a role in Ennis' writing ever since his first paid work, *Troubled Souls*, and even *Preacher* had a flashback to the Easter Rising. After *Preacher*, though, with his reputation firmly established, Ennis was able to become a writer and champion of the sort of war comics he admired as a kid. *Battlefields* is a good place to start.



"HAD IT FAILED, I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN REMOTELY SURPRISED"
GARTH ENNIS

have ended up with exactly the same tastes as the rest of the industry."

Rather than find himself at odds with it, his views couldn't have been better timed. The escalating ambitions of comic writers led to publishing houses reaching out to older and more mature readers. *Crisis*, a socially conscious, politically aware offshoot of *2000 AD*, was launched in 1988 for that purpose, and Ennis was one of the first in line when the signing tour reached Belfast. He pitched an idea exploring the human impact of the conflict between the British and IRA, something he'd later describe to *Comic Buzz* as "a nakedly ambitious attempt to jump start my career by whatever means necessary."

It worked. Within a few months, Ennis and his artist, John McCrea, were commissioned to write the story for *Crisis*, across 100 pages, in full colour. "There was a sense that we'd landed something big here," Ennis said on *Distraction Pieces*. "There was a sense of, 'This is it! We've done it!'"

The next 18 months brought Ennis everything he thought he wanted. John Wagner, the creator of *Judge Dredd*, picked him to take over the character.



Preacher helped turn Ennis into one of the most respected names in comics.



The kind of gig that virtually every aspiring comics writer dreams about was handed to Ennis, and yet he found himself unable to add anything new. He wrote *Dredd* for several years, and in doing so learned a valuable lesson.

"Don't look back. Don't repeat what's already been done," he said at Emerald City Comic-Con. "Don't be the 489th guy to write *Daredevil*, or the 987th guy to write *Batman*. You're not going to say anything new. That's what the experience of *Dredd* taught me."

About a year after starting on *Dredd*, he had also been hired to take over on *Hellblazer*. The experience would prove ambiguous. Ennis was writing a character created by one of his idols, Alan Moore, and his writing had become more confident and distinct. The art was better too, due to the arrival of a new guy, Steve Dillon. But despite the minor victories, Ennis couldn't escape the bigger picture, particularly the advice given to him by Moore.

"Just own what you create," Ennis recalled at Emerald City Comic-Con. "Use these companies – 2000 AD, DC, Marvel – to establish a reputation, but don't ever think that they'll look

after you in the long run... That's why *Preacher* was important to me."

Dillon's arrival had been a catalyst for a marked improvement in Ennis' writing. Vertigo was open to publishing an original concept as long as they worked on it together. It was a chance for Ennis to create something as ambitious as *Troubled Souls*. The premise came to him first – a disillusioned preacher, possessed by a rogue supernatural force, a God grown tired of his own creation. The horror and western aspect emerged over time, as did the humour and will to engage with thorny issues like religion and pull no punches.

Ennis described the process as running "largely on instinct". Speaking to *Distraction Pieces*, he admitted to a lack of certainty that *Preacher*'s bolder ideas would help it find an audience. "I just didn't know it was going to take off the way it did," he said. "That first year, it bumbled along okay. It had a certain reputation within the industry. People were saying, 'I can't believe you're able to do this.' It had an audience, but that audience was doing what audiences tend to with comics: steadily decline."

The turnaround captured exactly what made *Preacher* so seductive. More people started praising Ennis and Dillon, which allowed it to beat a path to other entertainment industries. Eventually, *Preacher* received glowing, if slightly incredulous, reviews. The story's religious aspects were being seized by users of the nascent internet as proof that comics were vile and blasphemous. Essentially, it meant more noise, more eyeballs and more sales; *Preacher* really did justify the hype.

"There was a real sense of this thing working, and of its reviving, and then being able to plan ahead and tell the whole story," Ennis continued. "It's important to emphasise that our creative instincts were backed up by sales. Without that, we'd have been just another Vertigo failure."

"But it stuck, and there was a sense that it worked because of the weird paths that it takes, so let's carry on down the weirder paths. Had it failed, I wouldn't have been remotely surprised. I'd have thought it was too much to ask people to accept, that it was too far into the dark recesses of my imagination. Too bad. Try again."



Your Take On The Classic

WHAT YOU THOUGHT @SCIFINOW



"It was my big intro to Garth Ennis & Steve Dillon - I read *Preacher* monthly and I can still quote just about everything! I love it" @mattlibrarian



"Sheer brilliance, utterly mental... And still less crazy than the book it's based upon! ;) #bookclub" @scapecy



"*Preacher* is my all time favorite series. As a ex priest with a massive hatred for religion I loved every part of this twisted tale" @giftsforthegeeks



"*Preacher* was a brilliant series, unflinchingly brutal, dark, and visceral! One of my favourite comic series EVER! #BookClub" @paul_bowler



"Blasphemous, brilliant, original fresh tale. Jaded, bizarre but unafraid to go wherever and do whatever. #BookClub" @ParsonFiction



"#Preacher contains the best damn quiche recipe I've ever seen. #BookClub" @Abby_Chandler



"Jesse Custer is the most manly man in the history of men. Distil all the 80s action heroes into 1, not even close to Jesse" @daddacool



"First graphic novel I ever read, it hit like an electric shock. I'd never seen anything like it. #BookClub" @HannahChapter1



"Bit dated these days but way back when it was the freshest comic going. I frequently ask myself 'What Would Jesse Custer Do'" @neil_bomb



"Compelling story/chars, a vein of deeply dark humour throughout, tasteless in parts, superb artwork. What's not to like #bookclub" @HarryPigg



"A wise man once said, 'more fun than going to the movies'. @ThatKevinSmith" @OneTimeCanine



"First read it when I was in high school. I'd never read anything like it at that stage. Lifelong fan." @Zombie_Phil

What do you think? Let us know on Twitter or Facebook



Which sub-genre
would you like to
see tackled next?

Let us know on Twitter
or Facebook



A Beginner's Guide To

Early Gothic Horror

Sex, murder, the devil and old dark houses... WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL

We all know what Gothic horror looks like: dark castles, brooding men, haunted women, terrible secrets and stormy nights, bodies in the basement and ghosts in the attic. More importantly though, we all know what it feels like.

Gothic horror isn't just about setting; it's about mood and creating a sensation in the reader, sending a chill down their spine.

Given the genre's massive popularity and omnipresence in the best-seller charts, it's almost surprising to see that the first example of it appeared relatively late with Horace Walpole's *The Castle Of Otranto* in 1764. However, what's not surprising is how quickly the genre became popular, with a legion of authors inspired to imitate, expand or pastiche the Gothic movement. Charlotte Brontë used it to add colour to *Jane Eyre*, while Jane Austen gleefully satirised it in *Northanger Abbey*, and there's a common theme of these stories verging on self-parody.

However seriously they may or may not have been taken, the massive success of these books ensured that they kept coming. Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries Of Udolpho* took the genre further into horror territory, and the wickedness perpetrated

in these novels grew increasingly salacious. Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* was tremendously shocking at the time, so full of sex and violence that it's impressive that he got away with it. While time has given these novels respectability, they were very much the saucy page-turners of their day.

The Gothic genre would take its next great stride with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, which married the

more titillating elements of the genre with a remarkable human story, and which gave birth to the form's next great innovation: the monster. As the 19th Century went on, monsters were used to explore the darkest parts of human nature, while Edgar Allan Poe gave birth to the detective novel with his Gothic fiction. Gothic would continue to evolve, but its roots can be traced back here.

The Monk is one of the earliest – and still one of the best – examples of Gothic horror.



Early Gothic Horror tropes

Things to look out for...



Castles

Sometimes it's an actual castle, and sometimes it's more of a lavish labyrinthine country estate, but you're going to find some kind of mansion that holds our heroine prisoner.



Sex

Much of Gothic horror was sensational stuff at the time, and that included pushing the boundaries of what could be acceptable. That meant violence, and that meant sex. Desperate lust drives all of the villains/antiheroes in the books that we've mentioned, as they prove to be willing to do anything to achieve their sordid goals.



Ingenues

Given that Gothic horror tends to favour the villainous male, our heroine is usually rather more delicate in contrast. She needs to be able to be swept along in the plot by the fortunes of others, whether that's a terrible choice of husband or the death of a relative plunging her into a terrifying new living situation.



A wicked sense of humour

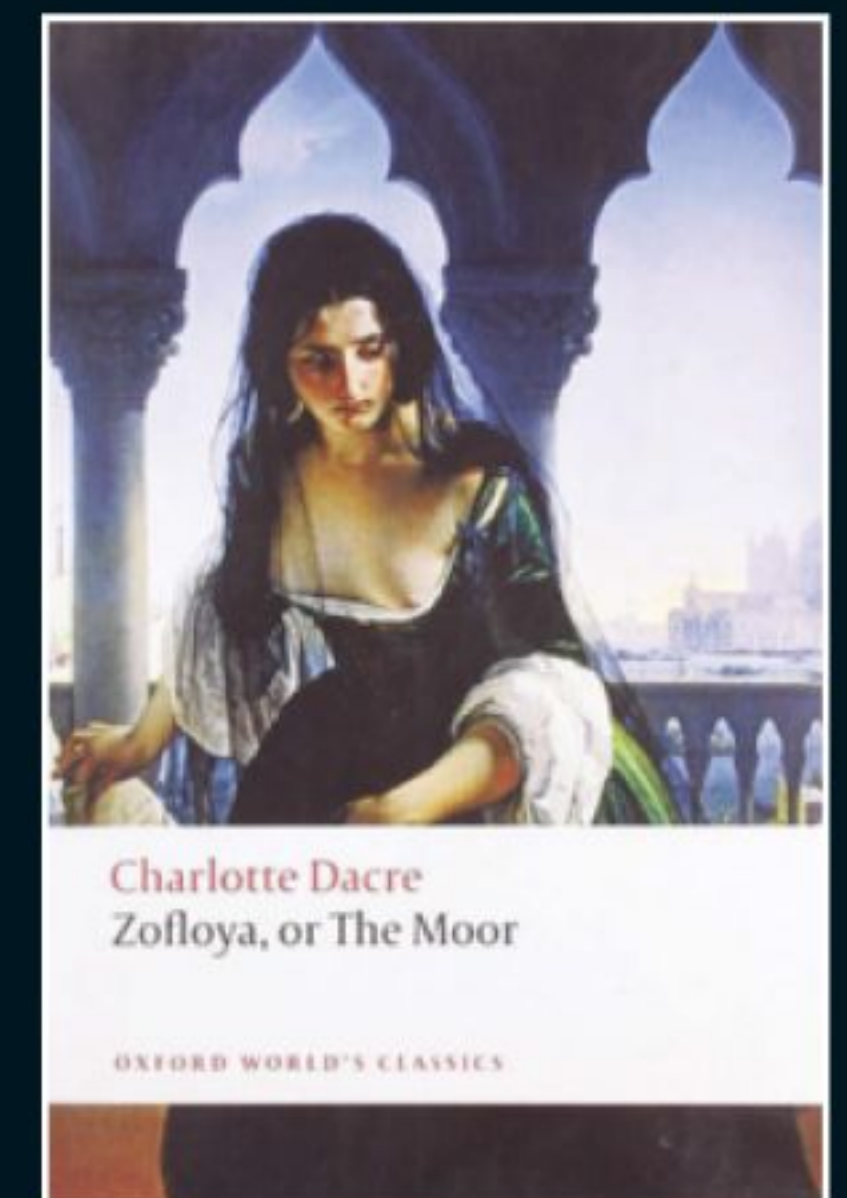
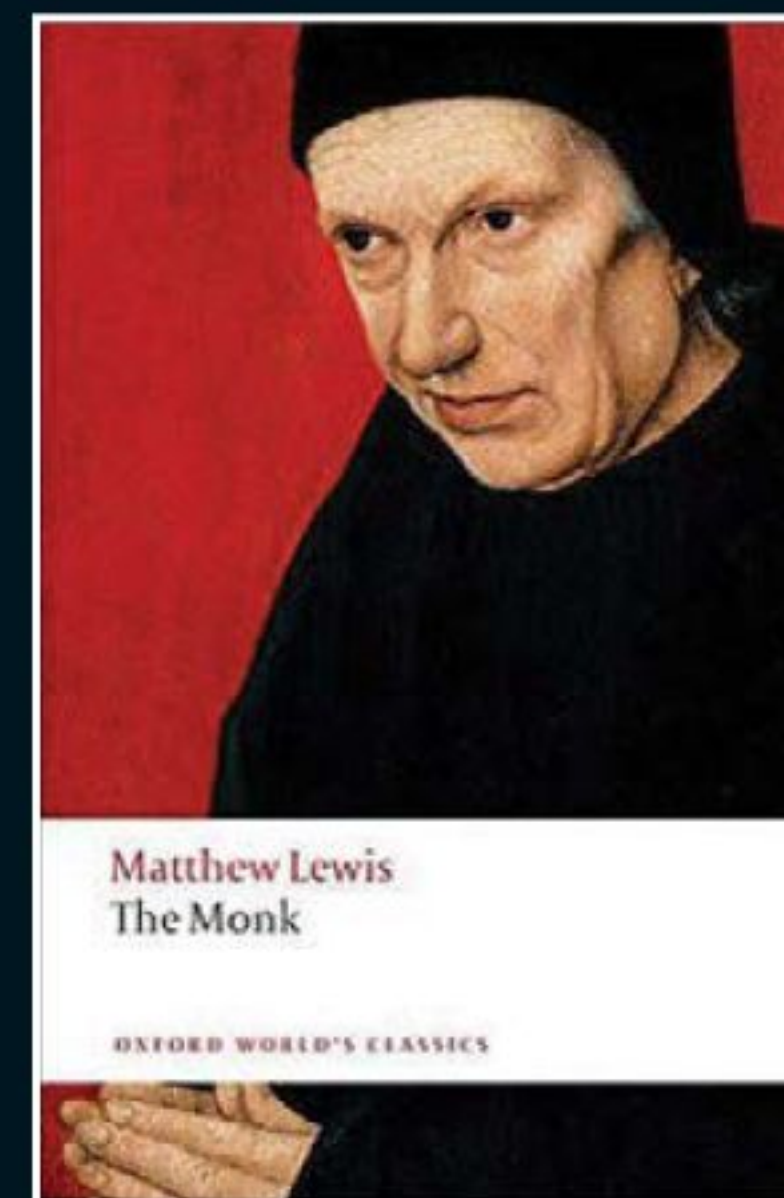
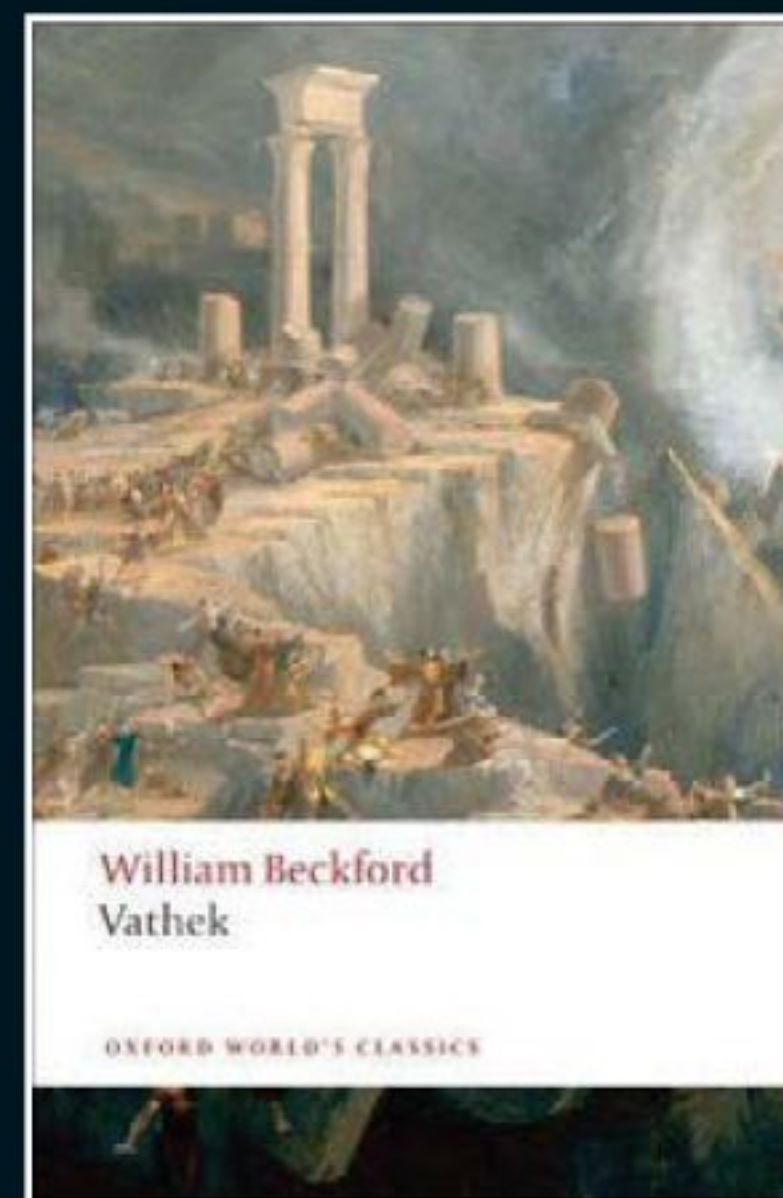
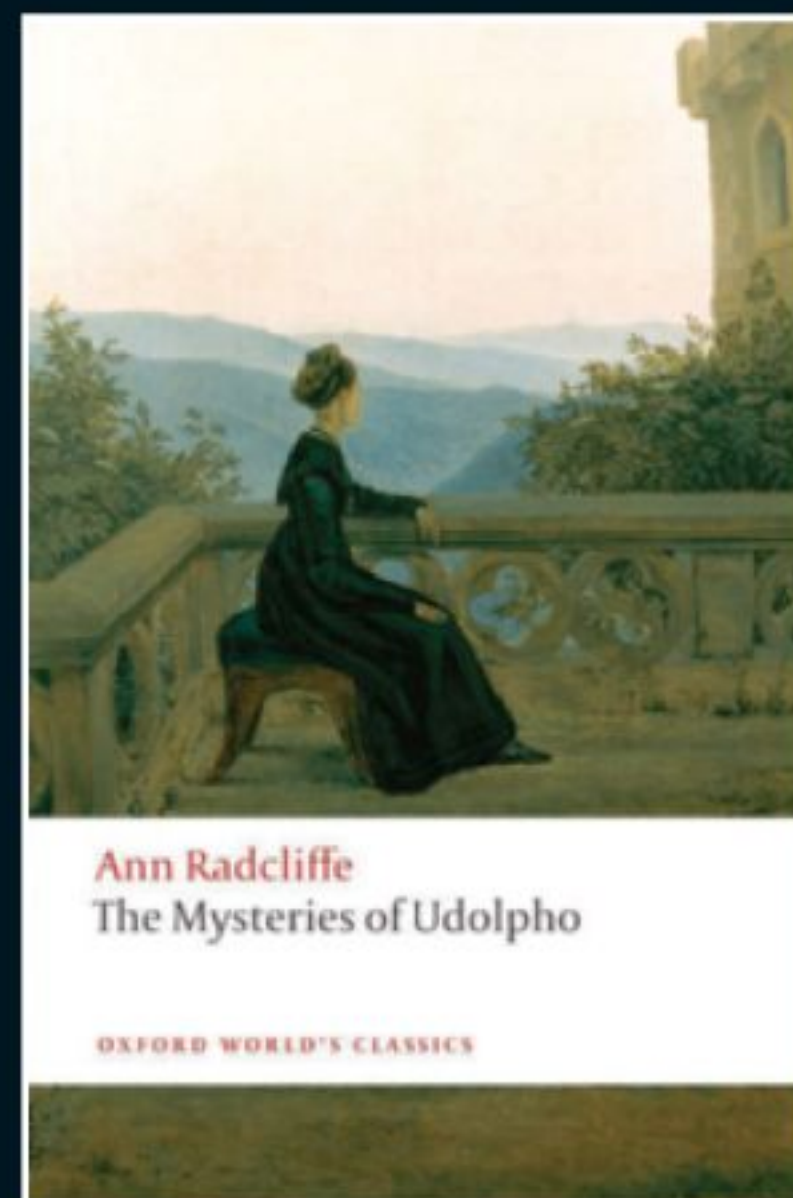
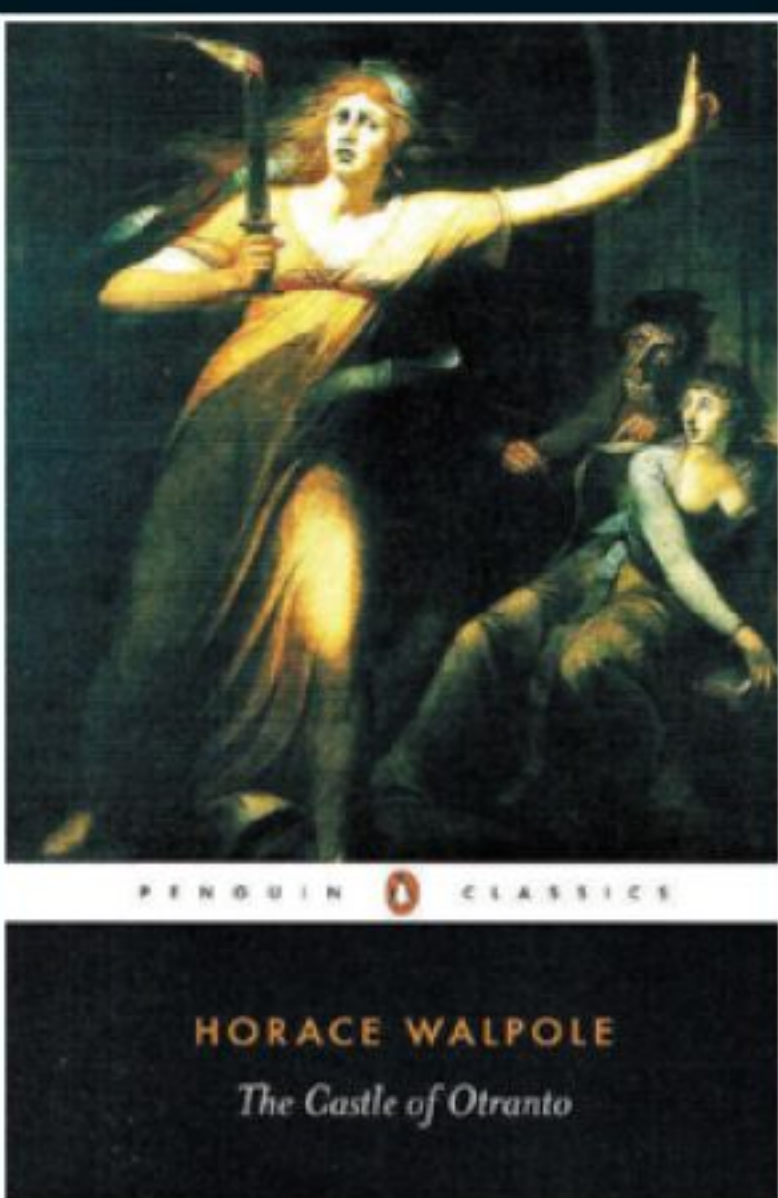
A lot of the authors working in the genre were very aware of what they were doing. Most of these novels have a lovely dark sense of humour to go with their outrageous and shocking tales. This does help with the often ridiculous twists.



Crimson Peak channels the spirit of many early Gothic horrors.



Vincent Cassel starred in the 2011 film adaptation of *The Monk*.



Knight Terrors

The genre is born

THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO

Author: Horace Walpole
Publisher: Oxford University Press
Published: 1764
Price: £4.99

Horace Walpole may have given birth to Gothic horror, but he tried to pass off his novel as someone else's work. Of course, its success changed his tune. *Reading The Castle Of*

Otranto today, some of it is a little difficult to get your head round, specifically the giant ghost helmet that comes out of nowhere. Can Manfred's schemes outwit our heroes and an ancient curse? Its immediate influence is unquestionable.

“The *huge ghostly helmet* is the best part. I was hoping a *huge ghostly coppice* would also appear. Disappointed. #BookClub @LegoHannibal

Family mysteries

Damsel in an old dark house

THE MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO

Author: Ann Radcliffe
Publisher: Oxford University Press
Published: 1794
Price: £8.99

Ann Radcliffe's masterpiece would be satirised by Jane Austen in *Northanger Abbey*, but it's wonderful in its own right, a glorious dark romance

that plunges its heroine into an increasingly desperate series of circumstances. There are plenty of rolling hills, sinister brigands and family plotting. It's beautiful stuff. Montoni is the archetypal, secretive, Gothic villain, while the imprisoned ingénue must escape him and his advances.

“It was fab, read it after all the references to it in *Northanger Abbey*. #BookClub” @PasmineJalmer

Arabian Frights

Mysteries of the East

VATHEK

Author: William Beckford
Publisher: OUP
Published: 1786
Price: £6.99

Beckford was apparently inspired to write his Gothic horror after arranging a celebration at his home that was Orientally themed. He later claimed to have written it all in one go, which may account for the increasingly frantic and frenzied ‘shocks’ of the narrative. It's the story of Caliph Vathek, whose quest for greater knowledge leads him into the hands of a malicious djinn who takes him straight to hell. There's racial stereotyping and homophobic panic, but its place in Gothic horror remains.

“Now, this is an absolute hoot. Love then ending - over the top doesn't cover it! #bookclub” @TheCrowAndGin

Forgive me, father

When good priests go bad

THE MONK

Author: Matthew Lewis
Publisher: Wordsworth Editions
Published: 1796
Price: £2.99

Matthew Lewis's fantastically seedy *The Monk* still packs a punch. It's so deliberately scandalous that it borders on parody, as Ambrosio, a self-important and universally adored priest, is led into temptation by a wicked woman posing as his male protégé. After a night of fornication with his new lover, Ambrosio sets his sights on the virginal Antonia, and will do anything to get her. It's not hard to imagine the shocked reception this would have had at the time.

“The *Monk* is one of my favourite Gothic Horror novels...it's very underrated and not talked about enough! #BookClub” @BrizzleLass

Wicked woman

Murder, magic, and the devil

ZOFLOYA, OR THE MOOR

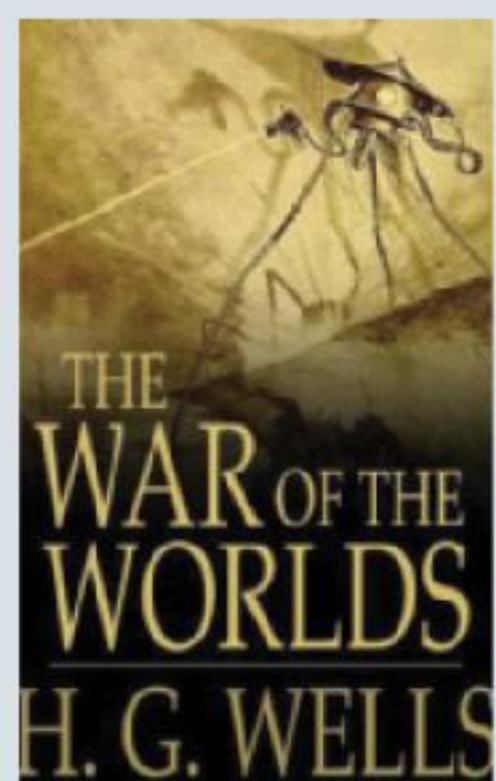
Author: Charlotte Dacre
Publisher: Oxford University Press
Published: 1806
Price: £7.99

The Gothic antihero was given a welcome feminine twist in Dacre's (under the pseudonym of Rosa Matilda) erotically charged *Zofloya*. It ruffled some feathers, as its protagonist fights her captors to emerge as a ferociously driven woman of her own. It's indebted to *The Monk* and *The Mysteries Of Udolpho*, but subverts the latter's damsel in distress. “Few venture as thou hast in the alarming paths of sin,” she's told. Damn right, and it's thrilling stuff.

“Would make a great film! Love, adultery, revenge, Venice & the Alps. #BookClub” @sally_holloway

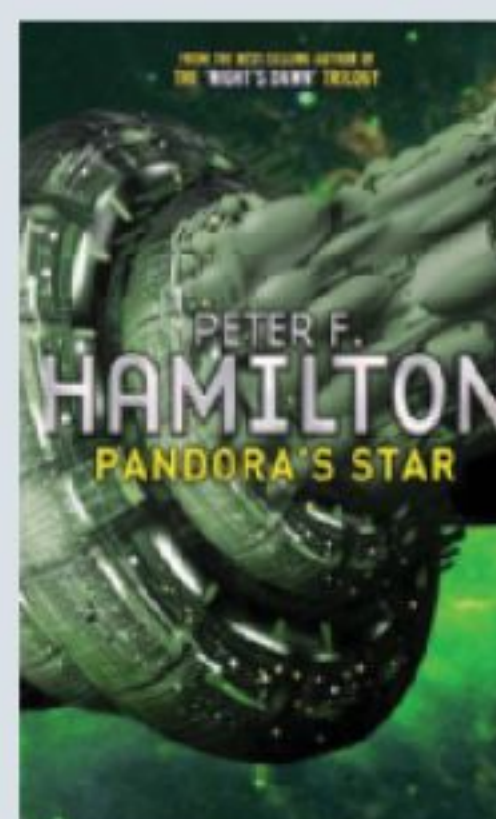
Your Five Favourite First Contact Novels

CHOOSE YOUR TOP FIVE
@SCIFINOW ON TWITTER



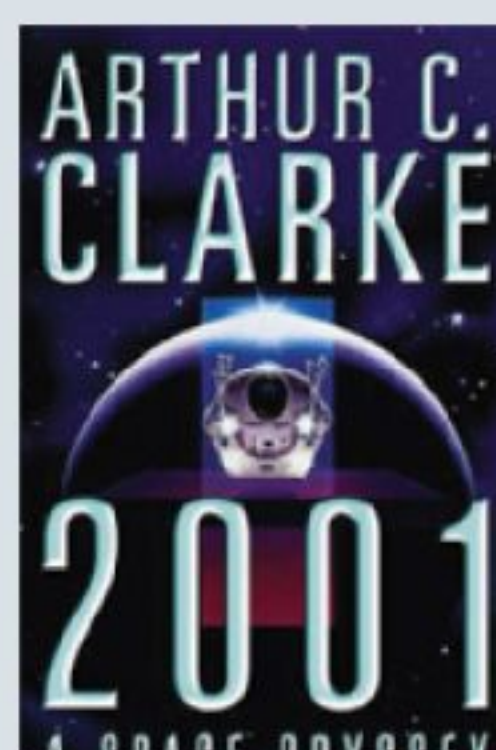
1. The War Of The Worlds

"I love War Of The Worlds by HG Wells and (might not count) but I think Hitchhiker's Guide is one hoopy frood. #BookClub"
@PasmineJalmer



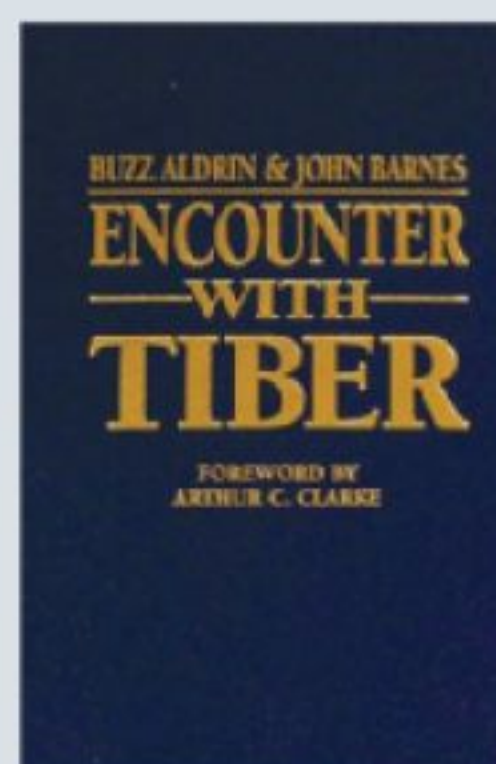
2. Pandora's Star

"@PeterF Hamilton's 's Pandora's Star. A joy to read with believable Aliens who have an alien agenda that isn't evil just alien. #BookClub"
@Craigsg1



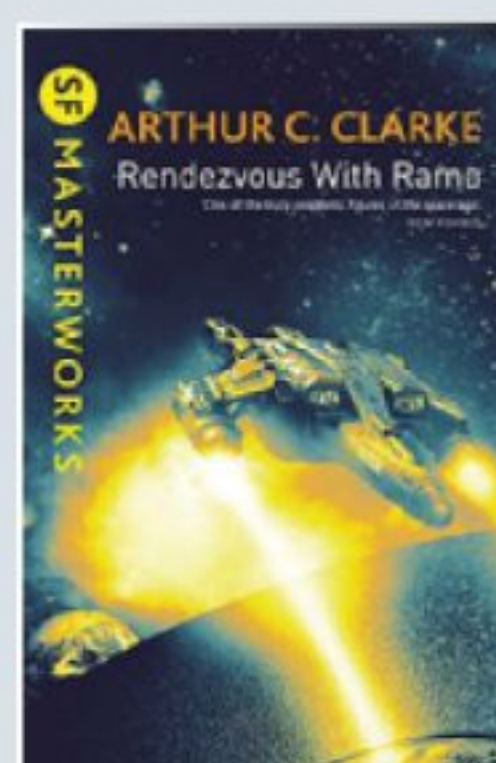
3. 2001

"My favorite novel about humanity's 1st encounter is 2001: A Space Odyssey, aliens don't invade, we go to meet them! #BookClub"
@Lady_Aleena



4. Encounter With Tiber

"Beautifully detailed, very technical, weaves a tale of first contact from both human and alien sides. #BookClub"
@Mabelspet



5. Rendezvous With Rama

"Right in second place, Clarke is a master of First Contact fiction. #BookClub"
@Parsons Fiction

Details Author: Sylvain Neuvel Publisher: Michael Joseph Price: £12.99 Released: 7 April

SLEEPING GIANTS

Chariots of the gods

The discovery of alien life is a delicate business in *Sleeping Giants*, the first in a proposed trilogy. It's not really a surprise to read that Sylvain Neuvel's debut novel has been optioned for a film. It's fast-moving, gripping, and affecting enough to make you forget the slightly unusual storytelling method.

As a child, Dr Rose Franklyn accidentally uncovers a giant metal hand, which is alien in origin. As an adult, Franklyn is leading the secret investigation into what exactly this thing is and where it came from when another piece is uncovered by a military helicopter crew in the Middle East.

As more segments are found, the small team realises that they fit together to form some kind of humanoid (although clearly alien in origin) robot, and one that can be piloted. But how will the world react to such a powerful weapon? And why would it have been left on Earth in the first place?

The story unfolds almost exclusively as a series of interviews (and some journal entries and reports) conducted by an unnamed, but obviously powerful, figure. Neuvel's method might be a little tricky to get used to at first, but the author quickly establishes the distinct and interesting personalities

of the various team members, as well as the shady operative whose actions push the narrative along, and who quickly becomes the most fascinating.

There's something very Michael Crichton-esque about *Sleeping Giants*, not just in its 'where did this come from, is it dangerous and why is it here?' setup, but in the collection of soldiers and scientists assembled to answer that question. Of the characters, Dr Rose is so excitable and benign that she's an excellent point of introduction to the story. Pilot Kara Resnik is endearingly insubordinate and difficult to get on with, her co-pilot Ryan Mitchell is an apparent puppy-dog, genius Vincent Couture is seemingly better with the science than he is with people, and scientist Alyssa Papantoniou is a little too eager to conduct invasive medical tests. Each character surprises, but they do so in ways that feel natural.

The political manoeuvring is just as important and compelling as the big questions. Our interviewer is operating in tricky political waters, and the problem of how other nations will respond to this incredibly powerful otherworldly weapon gives the story an extra level of tension. Not that it particularly needs it, as the conflicts between the team members will keep you committing to just one more chapter after you planned to go to bed.

At times the narrative technique does feel a little too simple, allowing Neuvel to jump from conflicts and cliff-hangers to their resolution, but it gives the novel such a brisk pace that it's hard to quibble too much. When the action is unfolding as it happens, as opposed to an incident being reported, it's absolutely gripping.

Apparently the first part of a trilogy, *Sleeping Giants* works very well as a standalone sci-fi that manages to make an enormous world event feel personal. Read it before they make the film.

Jonathan Hatfull

SciFiNow scored **8** for *Sleeping Giants*
Follow our scores on [JUST A SCORE](#)

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...
The Martian
Andy Weir
The novel that inspired the film is a science-heavy, mostly journal-style sci-fi joy.



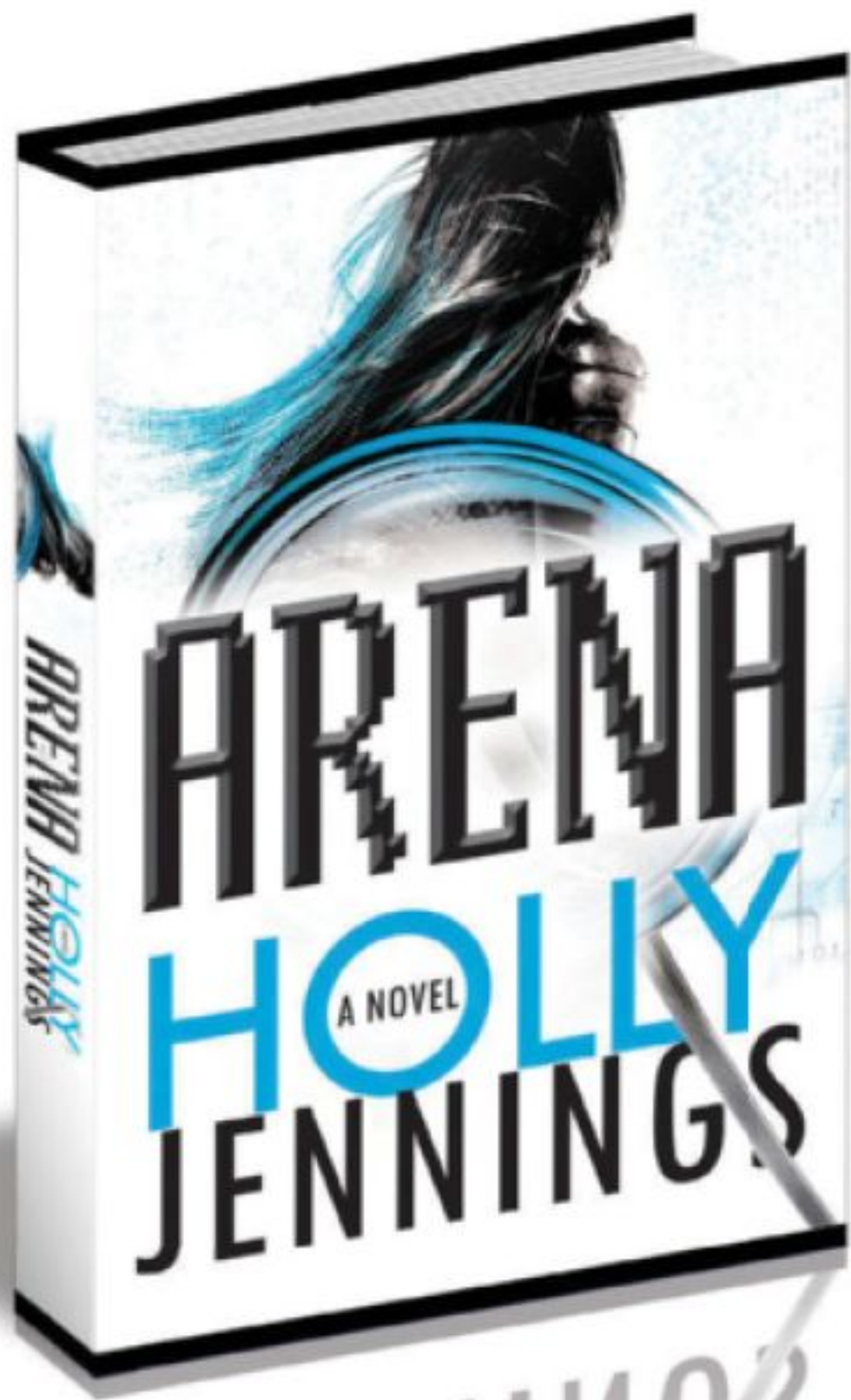


Details Author: Holly Jennings Publisher: Ace Books Price: £18.99 Released: 7 April

ARENA Fight for your rights

No one cares about football in *Arena*. Rugby is long forgotten, Wimbledon a distant past, along with pretty much every other professional sport, and no one even remembers how to play baseball.

Nope, the competitive sport of choice in this futuristic world, built



by author Holly Jennings, is virtual reality gaming; specifically the RAGE tournament, in which superstar gamers battle to kill one another in ever more violent ways. Kali Ling is the first girl ever to lead a RAGE team, and if her team comes out on top, they'll be set for life, with all the cash and corporate sponsorships they could ever want or need.

But it won't be easy. Plugging into the virtual world of RAGE has consequences for its players, and when one of her teammates dies of a drug overdose, Kali realises how messed up the whole system is. Cue a daring rebellion.

There are lots of parallels with *The Hunger Games* to be drawn here; although Kali won't actually die in the game, she's still in danger, and image is everything, as her terrifying Simon Cowell-esque manager keeps telling her. She's even pushed into a fake romance with one of her teammates to keep them in the headlines.

Luckily, Kali's not just a Katniss Everdeen clone – she's got her own voice, and her journey from drug-

addicted party girl to empowered badass is inspiring.

Arena's take on celebrity culture is sobering, too. The RAGE tournaments might not be real, but the way the gamers are treated is clearly a critique of the way young celebrities (actors, musicians, athletes) are forced into an image and lifestyle that seems aspirational even when it's more genuinely destructive.

Towards the end, as Kali learns to value what's really real, things do get a bit preachy, but ignore that and this is a compulsive and even, whisper it, uplifting read. You may not find anything entirely new within its pages, but you'll enjoy yourself all the same.

Sarah Dobbs

SciFiNow scored **7** for *Arena*
Follow our scores on [JUST A SCORE](#)

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...
The Hunger Games
Suzanne Collins
Katniss Everdeen volunteers for the deadly Hunger Games and ends up leading a revolution and changing the world.



YOUR READS

What you lot have been reading this month



"Reading *A Better Way to Die*, the collected short stories by Paul Cornell. So far, so good. Just finished *The Peripheral* - excellent! #BookClub" @MrsHirez



"Just finished George R R Martin's *A Storm Of Swords Part 1: Steel & Snow*. Kept my interest more than the 1st 2 books. #BookClub" @indianamulder



"Currently reading *Ready Player One* and so far, really enjoying it. #BookClub" @kshoni_gunputh



"Currently enjoying *The Caves Of Steel* by Asimov. #BookClub" @LiamAnthony84



"*World War Hulk*. A destructive yet strangely emotional story. #BookClub" @Jbarnes532



"I'm reading *Hunger* by Michael Grant. Loving the series so far! #BookClub" @saltgunner



"Those Above by @DanielPolansky really enjoying the world building, slightly slow to start, but now completely gripped #BookClub" @Cascararogue



"Just started *The Masked City*, book 2 of The Invisible Library Series by Genevieve Cogman. Great so far! #BookClub" @philbooty



"*A Brief History Of Time* by Stephen Hawking. It's like a textbook but with more sci-fi elements! #BookClub" @spokar



"Just started *Darkly Dreaming Dexter* by Jeff Lindsay, very good so far! #BookClub" @RockingRhys



"#Desperation by @StephenKing, can't put it down" @PosterPosse

Tell us what you're reading on Twitter or Facebook

Author: Lavie Tidhar Publisher: Tachyon Price: £11.21 Released: 26 May

CENTRAL STATION Heading into cyber space

Having sent up superheroes in *The Violent Century* and depicted the true brutality of concentration camp life in *A Man Lies Dreaming*, Lavie Tidhar's latest novel takes the cyberpunk route, sea-sawing in location from Tel Aviv to Mars via the space-set Central Station.

With 250,000 people decamped at the foot of the space station to escape the desolate backdrop that the world has become, it could be tempting to view this as an allegory for the current state of affairs in Europe. Instead, Tidhar is more interested in following his protagonists: Mars exile Boris, and two of his former lovers: Miriam, who comes in tow with a gifted child; and Carmel, a 'data vampire' on the run from the authorities.

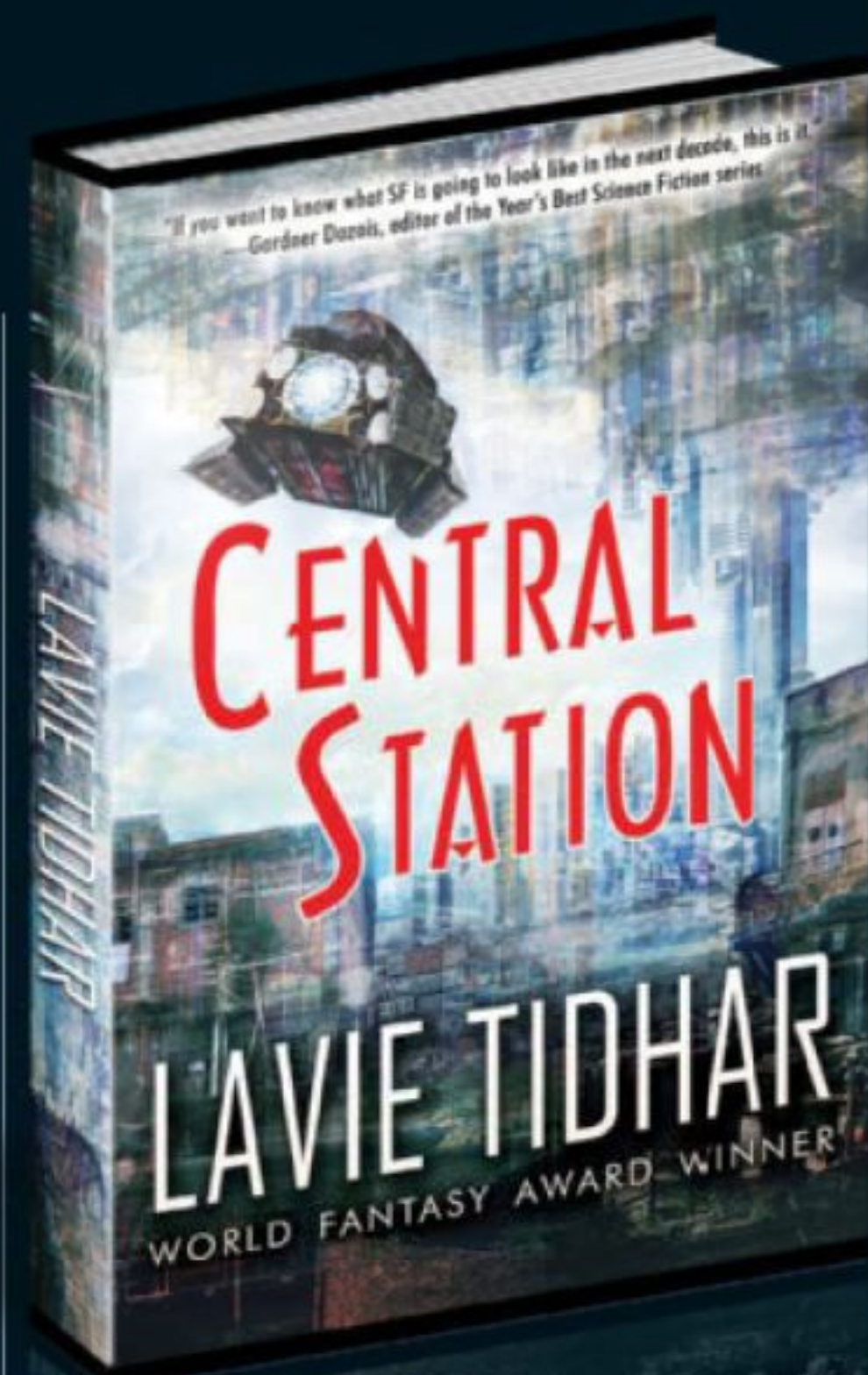
With the narrative constantly shifting between the real and virtual world, making few concessions to its readers, this is arguably

Tidhar's most ambitious book to date – which says a lot, considering the singular nature of his previous output. However, while his other work always had something to latch onto, *Central Station* is an infinitely tougher proposition to get a handle on.

The way Tidhar takes on heavy sci-fi concepts and runs with them bears comparisons with the likes of William Gibson, Isaac Asimov and Philip K Dick, although while they were always able to ground their work in something relatable, the same trick isn't managed here. Tidhar is so in love with the world he has created that as a consequence, the story isn't given quite the level of coherence it needs.

Even if he doesn't quite nail it, Tidhar's exploration of the possibilities of cyberpunk yields some interesting results. Where he goes from here is anyone's guess, but the genre is all the better off for his presence.

Steve Wright



SciFiNow scored **6** for *Central Station*
Follow our scores on [JUST A SCORE](#)

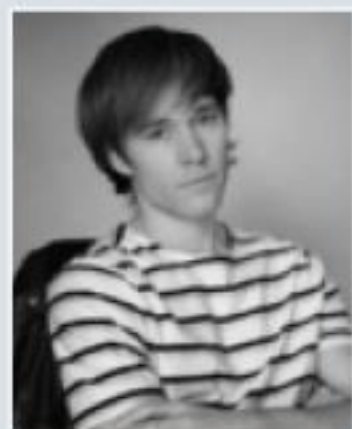
IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...
Neuromancer
William Gibson
Made it impossible not to think of it while reading anything else in the cyberpunk sub-genre.





60 SECONDS WITH

Thomas Olde Heuvelt



How would you pitch *HEX*?

A modern-day town, haunted by a 17th century witch whose eyes are sewn shut, is quarantined by

its elders to prevent her curse from exploding. Frustrated with being kept in lockdown, the town's teenagers decide to break their strict regulations, but in doing so send the town spiralling into very dark times. With *HEX*, I set off to write the scariest book I could imagine. I took elements from classical horror and tried to turn them around in a modern, twisted way. But besides the supernatural power, it's a book mostly about human evil.

How did the idea first come about?

I always had the idea for a story about a modern town haunted by a centuries-old witch, but what made it tick was that she's not some scary ghost, but the underdog, the town's fool! They are so used to her presence that they aren't scared by her anymore. She annoys them. While it seems funny on the surface, it's actually a horrifying image. And of course, if you dig deeper, the people *are* scared. Very scared. *HEX* is about the destructive force of fear and the evil things we are capable of as human beings once fear takes over

Have you always been drawn to horror?

Yeah. My grandpa used to tell me horror stories before bed, so you can blame him. I was scared nuts. Then at age eleven, I read Stephen King's *Pet Sematary*, and I was hooked. In my formative years, Stephen King and Clive Barker were the only horror writers I could get my hands on in my home country of The Netherlands, so they've influenced me a great deal.

What advice would you give a writer looking to scare their readers?

I don't really believe you can tell anyone how it works. Making a reader laugh, cry or scared out of their wits... you just go ahead and do it. Of course, you can turn of the lights, close your eyes, and imagine that draft you just felt is someone standing behind you, breathing

softly in your neck... but be sure to memorise the keys to write it all down.

HEX by Thomas Olde Heuvelt will be published by Hodder & Stoughton on 28 April.



Author: Ken Liu Publisher: Head of Zeus Price: £18.99 Released: Out now

THE PAPER MENAGERIE AND OTHER STORIES

A magical menagerie bound to charm

Incredibly, Ken Liu has written over 100 stories, and somehow found the time to debut his own silkpunk fantasy novel, *The Grace Of Kings*, and the English translation of the much-lauded *The Three Body Problem* by Cixin Liu (the first translated novel to win a Hugo) in the last two years also.

The Paper Menagerie And Other Stories contains 15 stunning tales. Ranging from mythology retold into digestible fantasy ('Good Hunting') to cyberpunk crime thrillers ('The Regular') and courageous tales of humanity's space exploration ('Mono No Aware'), there is no end to Liu's genius in working with a wealth of sci-fi subgenres and Chinese themes.

So it's no surprise that the setting and timeline for each story differs vastly from the next too, such as the warring Three

Kingdoms of Ancient China acting as a parallel to San Francisco in the 19th century ('All The Flavours'). Liu's imagery never ceases to impress; he combines interesting backdrops to accentuate a whole host of intricate reactions, making him a true master of emotion and authenticity.

It is also the context of the settings that makes them the real bastions of the collection. Liu thoughtfully tackles racism, history, identity and culture throughout. While his characters are brave in the face of adversity, their flaws and sacrifices better the immersion – they truly resonate with readers regardless of if they are Chinese gods or the leftover humans of a dystopian Earth.

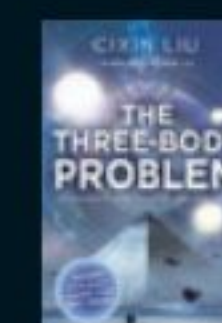
And if the awards aren't evidence enough, then *The Paper Menagerie and Other Stories* will cement Liu as a once-in-a-lifetime author. Certainly, his work is both stimulating and



intoxicating and is the catalyst that sees contemporary Chinese fiction propelled to the forefront of sci-fi.

Carrie Mok

SciFiNow scored 10 for *The Paper Menagerie and Other Stories*
Follow our scores on JUST A SCORE



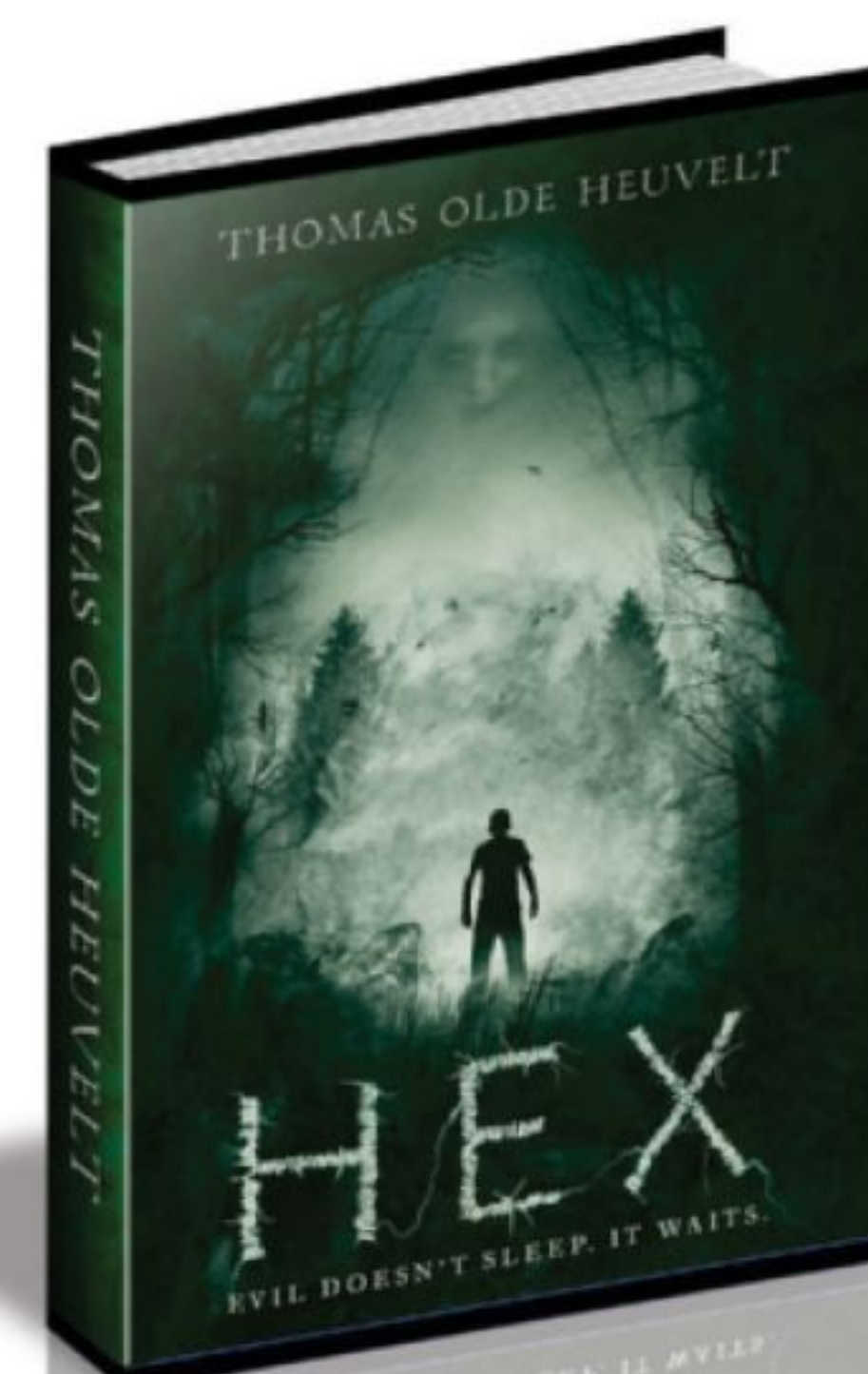
IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...

The Three Body Problem
Cixin Liu
This acclaimed hard sci-fi must-read meshes historical fiction with orbital mechanics.

Details Author: Thomas Olde Heuvelt Publisher: Hodder & Stoughton Price: £16.99 Released: 28 April

HEX Witches get stitches

Dutch novelist Thomas Olde Heuvelt's English language debut shows his obvious love of American genre fiction (especially the great Stephen King), but it also shows that he's very much capable of building a convincing small East Coast town and then tearing it to pieces.



Black Rock might look like an idyllic upstate New York getaway, but there's a reason why the locals don't want anyone new moving in. The town is haunted by grudge-bearing witch Katherine Van Wyler, who appears and reappears at will and whose eyes and mouth are sewn shut. Her whispers can compel rational people to kill themselves, but don't think about moving away. Once you buy into Black Rock, you're stuck there, and any long period of time out of town results in suicidal thoughts.

The trapped citizens do their best to live normal lives, but when frustrated teenager Tyler and his friends begin to push their luck, a chain of events begins that will put everyone's lives in danger. How far can these people be pushed before they snap?

It's hard to read this kind of story and not be reminded of King (*Pet Sematary* and *Needful Things* particularly come to mind), but after a couple of early wobbles we're rewarded

with a thoughtful and intricately constructed chiller that drags its characters slowly but surely towards their doom. Olde Heuvelt takes the time to establish the power dynamics as well as the family relationships that will see dividing lines being drawn.

It's definitely scary. Katherine is a fantastically creepy creation, and her place in the town is very well thought out. There's a special team dedicated to keeping track of her, but everyone's gotten complacent. As Olde Heuvelt pushes his characters to breaking point, we see that human nature is just as scary as any monster.

Jonathan Hatfull

SciFiNow scored 7 for *Hex*
Follow our scores on JUST A SCORE



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...

Under Ground
SL Grey
A diverse group takes shelter from the apocalypse in an underground bunker, but the biggest danger is themselves.

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Renaissance Hotel, Heathrow



Author: Corinne Duyvis Publisher: Abrams Price: £10.99 Released: Out now

ON THE EDGE OF GONE

On the edge of something

Dutch author Corinne Duyvis has succeeded in her novel, *On The Edge Of Gone*, where so many post-apocalypse authors have failed: she didn't set the plot in the US. A teen from Amsterdam, Holland, Denise's whole life changes when they are informed that a comet is heading straight for Earth. When the day comes, they must find shelter, but instead of ending up in a bunker – where her sister, Iris, hopefully is – Denise ends up with her (rather useless) mother on board a generation ship.

On the whole, the plot and setting of the novel are different from what you might have come across before. The setup is genuinely intriguing, and the supporting cast of characters provide a colourful host of interactions.

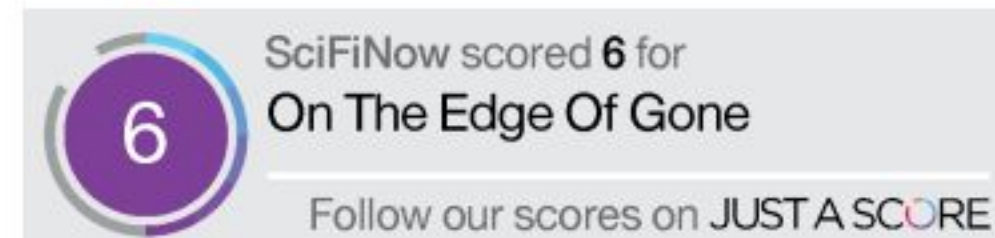
Yet there are moments, as with most YA, where the protagonist seems more interested in boys than the fact that the world is ending. She even comments on the idea that she has been informed of more important information to survive. It's a little tired in format, and could do with being injected with more pizzazz.

Duyvis attempts to make sure that the novel doesn't fall into any major clichés, but in trying to do so, does.

While interesting enough, it doesn't do much to drag you by the lapels through its pages. The author has built her characters around several ideas, but often latches into these details too often, rarely building deeper. Denise likes to read, which you will be reminded of often. It serves to drive home the point that she is just an ordinary girl thrust into this extraordinary world, but there are other characteristics that could have been portrayed to support this.

Overall, it is a spout of fantastic ideas, not quite executed with perfection.

Jen Neal



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...

Divergent
Veronica Roth
Teens are sorted into different factions in a post-apocalyptic Chicago, Illinois.

Author: Trevor Hoyle Publisher: Jo Fletcher Books Price: £10.99 Released: 7 April

THE LAST GASP

Death is in the air

Climate thrillers, let alone good ones, are few and far between, which is perplexing when we consider how much the debate of climate change has permeated every level of politics and society over the last several decades.

That's why *The Last Gasp* is a minor revelation. A group of scientists discover that Earth will run out of breathable air, due to human pollution.

Originally published in 1983, Hoyle's speculative sci-fi epic was regarded by many at the time as a rather outlandish and overtly cynical account of a man-made apocalypse.

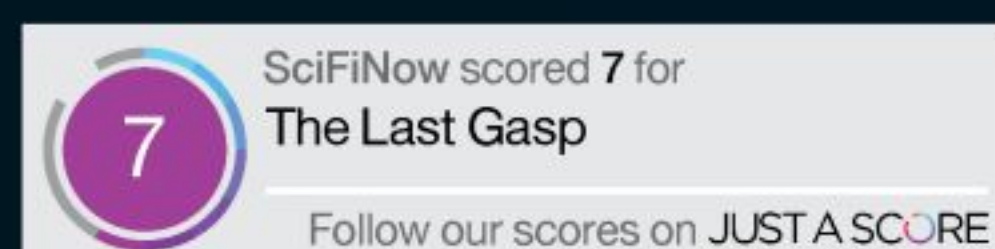
Reading it today reveals how eerily prescient Hoyle turned out to be. Even if some of the science won't necessarily turn out to be true, his depiction of apathetic, self-serving and outright dangerous governments is scarily on-point. We see a world caught in a new arms race, one where the last bit of breathable air is the ultimate prize.

The latest, revised edition's starting point is 2016 instead of 1990, and

events of the last 30 years have been incorporated into the story. This includes extensive research and several new chapters, even though the novel's main message is the same – and it is laid on thick.

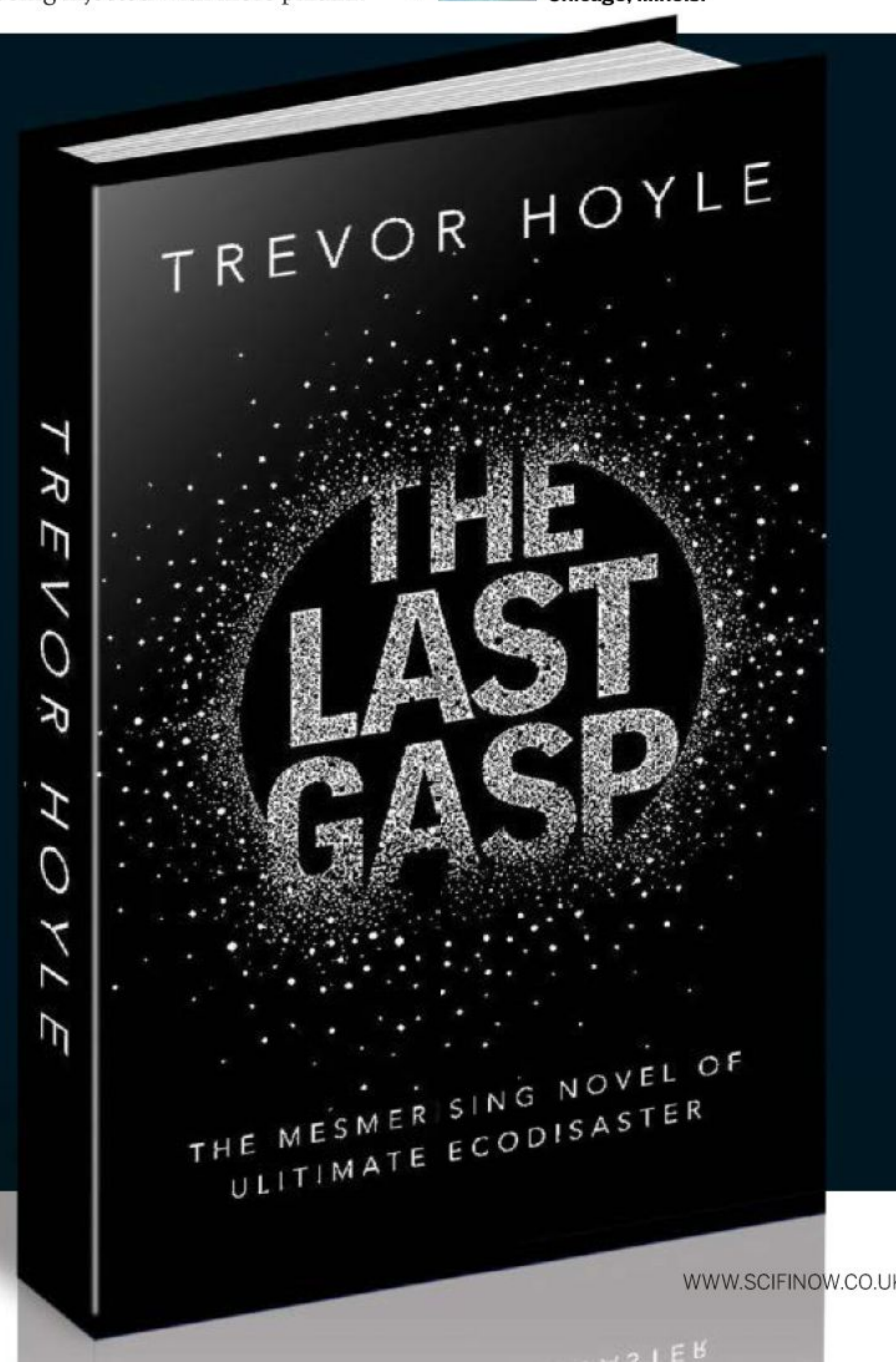
This applies equally to the tone – frequently veering toward lecturing the reader – and the novel's excessive length. This undermines the narrative, especially as the setup and conclusion achieve a frenetic, levels of pure cinematic pace. If it wasn't for the overly indulgent 550 pages in between, this latest edition of *The Last Gasp* would be near-unmissable.

Erlingur Einarsson



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...

State Of Fear
Michael Crichton
Crichton's eco-thriller blends frantic action with lectures and essays on climate change and critical thinking.



"TRULY HILARIOUS"

CINEMA ETC



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BREAK DID ME
GOOD. I CAME
BACK REFRESHED,
IF ANYTHING
JOE ABERCROMBIE ”**

Straight to the point

We talk to Joe Abercrombie about returning to the land of the First Law and the different world of YA fiction

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL

It may not be the rule to which the title of Joe Abercrombie's fantasy series alludes, but it is a universal truth that if you've read one of his *First Law* books, you're going to want to read another. The series started with 2006's brutal and brilliant *The Blade Itself*, which spawned its own trilogy and three standalone novels, culminating in 2012 with *Red Country*.

The *First Law* world is full of bloody violence, powerful magic and Machiavellian scheming, and packed with unforgettable characters with their own charms, flaws, vendettas and favourite torture methods. We're very, very excited about what's coming next. After taking a break to write his excellent YA trilogy *The Shattered Sea*, Abercrombie has returned to the world of *The First Law* for a collection of short stories: *Sharp Ends*.

How does it feel to return to the world of the *First Law*?
Like stepping into a favourite pair of boots: Nazgul boots in which I have crushed the skulls of many an enemy.

Was there any difficulty stepping back into that world after some time away, or is it a riding-a-bike situation?
I think the break only did me good. When you write a lot of books in the same world you build up a hell of a lot of characters and back story, which is really useful in one way, as you have all this history to draw on, but at the same time there's a lot to keep track of, a lot to keep consistent. I think there's always the risk of finding yourself running over the same ground with diminishing returns. I came back a little refreshed, if anything.

Did writing the YA *Shattered Sea* books affect the way you approach the *First Law* stories?
Writing shorter, more tightly focused stories was certainly a useful exercise. With the *Shattered Sea* books I was really trying to keep things moving with every line – a slap in the face on every page. It's helped me to structure for a more economical, driving narrative, and to achieve more with every scene and paragraph.

Is there something quite liberating about short stories when you've been working with series and trilogies?

They're certainly each a lot less work, which is nice, but then there's a certain amount of development you have to do in setting up a book – getting the character's voice right, mostly – that you still have to do with every short story. So on a per-word basis they're probably more work than novels, at least for me. I think novels are my natural length, much more than short stories.

Were there any characters you felt particularly compelled to return to?

Logen and Glokta, certainly, are characters that people often ask me to return to, so I think it might have felt a bit mean not to revisit them. I try to see them through the eyes of someone else, though, and show a very different side to them. *Sharp Ends* features a young, magnificently awful Colonel Glokta before his fall from grace, and a younger Logen when he was still busy creating a bloody past rather than trying to escape it. I always like revisiting old characters in a new way, but I try never to tread quite the same ground twice.

Is there one *First Law* book that particularly stands out for you as a personal favourite?

They're a bit like children – I love them all for different reasons, though we've certainly had our moments when we didn't get on. *The Blade Itself* is rough round the edges, but it's my first book, so of course has a special place. *Last Argument Of Kings* has the thrill of ending a big series and seeing plot threads come together. I think *Before They Are Hanged* is maybe the best constructed of the three in the trilogy. Then *Best Served Cold* has a certain raw extremity about it. *The Heroes* is I think my most thematically and technically ambitious book, and *Red Country* has a more intimate focus on a smaller cast, and is maybe a little warmer than the other books (which is a strange word to use about a book with as many murders as that one).

Is there still a plan for more *First Law* novels after this?
I'm in the midst of writing another trilogy set in the same world right now. Don't hold your breath for it to come out, though.

INTERVIEW

Straight To The Point



A quick guide to his greatest hits



The Blade Itself (2006)

The first of *The First Law* books introduces the world and our three heroes, so to speak: weary warrior Logen Ninefingers, tortured torturer Sand dan Glokta, and Jezal dan Luthar, a spoiled nobleman in the military. Each is in the midst of their own struggle, but something big is brewing.



Best Served Cold (2009)

Set a few years after the conclusion of the trilogy, this standalone novel introduces the awesome Monza Murcatto, a double-crossed mercenary who sets out to wreak terrible vengeance on the incredibly powerful men who tried to kill her, with the help of a dangerously disloyal crew.



Half A King (2014)

Abercrombie's YA trilogy may tone down the violence and general bastard nature of humanity, but not by much. This is the bruising, stirring tale of Prince Yarvi, betrayed and left for dead by his men, who must find his way home across dangerous territory with a band of rogues.

Do you think that your writing process has changed over the years?

It evolves a little bit with every book, partly to suit the project, partly because you learn new things, try new things, try constantly to improve. I've certainly got a lot more efficient and structured in the way I go about planning, drafting, and revising in several specific phases. I still hate every book while I'm writing it, but I've learned to accept that now, and that things will just come good in the end. Mostly...

What would you say to someone who had never read a *First Law* book before to convince them to get into it?

This will be the most profound and wonderful experience of your, or anyone else's, life. You can trust me: I make things up for a living.

Finally, if you could write a story set in any other author's universe, which would it be and why?

There are many worlds that I love and admire, but I think what I really respond to isn't the geography of the fantastical ideas, but the voice of the writer, the characters that only they can produce. I'm not sure other writers can every really pick up someone else's world and replicate what makes it successful. If I wrote a story in Middle-Earth, it could only be a bad pastiche of Tolkien, and we probably have enough of those out there. So I'll probably stick to my own worlds. Having said that, I've been massively enjoying reading *Wizard Of Earthsea* to my daughter. A book that proves you can summon up vivid, powerful, original worlds while still keeping things tight and focused.



Sharp Ends will be published by Gollancz on 26 April.

Details Writer: Jonathan Hickman Artist: Esad Ribic
Publisher: Marvel/Panini Price: £16.99 Released: Out now

SECRET WARS

Realities bite

So this is how the world ends: or not, as it turns out. Widely billed as the 616 universe's big culmination, it's rather an excuse to 'streamline' (for lack of a better word) the Marvel universe while retaining popular storytelling elements like Miles Morales and Old Man Logan.

It all kicks off with a grand old (literal) collision between the 616 and Ultimate universes, all the while Doctors Doom and Strange wrestle power from the Beyonders in a bid to save the universe, and disparate groups of heroes and villains escape the destruction in their own manner. From the second issue, we're introduced to Battleworld, a land composed of different elements of the multiverse, where God Emperor Doom rules with an iron fist, with Sheriff Strange at his side, an army of Thors at his command, and Susan Richards as his wife.

As you would expect, this new world order doesn't last for long, as the surviving 616 heroes and villains (as well as tagalong Morales) set about dismantling what has been brought about. Structurally, it's pretty much a lift of *House Of M*, with the Molecule Man as a supercharged Scarlet Witch. Unlike that particular crossover, however, the main arc doesn't work as well by itself: both storylines have a substantial amount of tie-in series (often based on recent events like *Civil War*, *Marvel Zombies* etc), but while *House Of M* was fairly standalone, the nine-issue *Secret Wars* feels slightly threadbare at times, like you're missing whole swathes of the story. The tie-ins should be optional filler, but this isn't always the case.

Saying that, the story's serviceable enough. Anyone who has ever wanted to know what a smackdown between those empowered alternately by the Beyonders, Infinity Gauntlet and Phoenix Force will get their question answered.

It also serves as a definitive insight into Doom's character. For all his genius and megalomania, his primary motivation is a petty one; namely getting one over Reed Richards, and underlining his apparent superiority in the process. Plus we are afforded some nice moments of characterisation from the newly popular Star-Lord, and Black Panther gets time to shine ahead of his first big-screen cameo.

Helping make the whole thing more accessible is the art of Esad Ribic. Having caught the eye in *X-Force* and *Thor: God*

Of Thunder, *Secret Wars* provides the perfect platform on which he can demonstrate his water colour-esque visuals, in particular capturing the juxtaposition between the two Mr Fantastic: the bearded and devastated yet determined Reed Richards of the 616, and the Ultimate universe's twisted, casually cruel Maker.

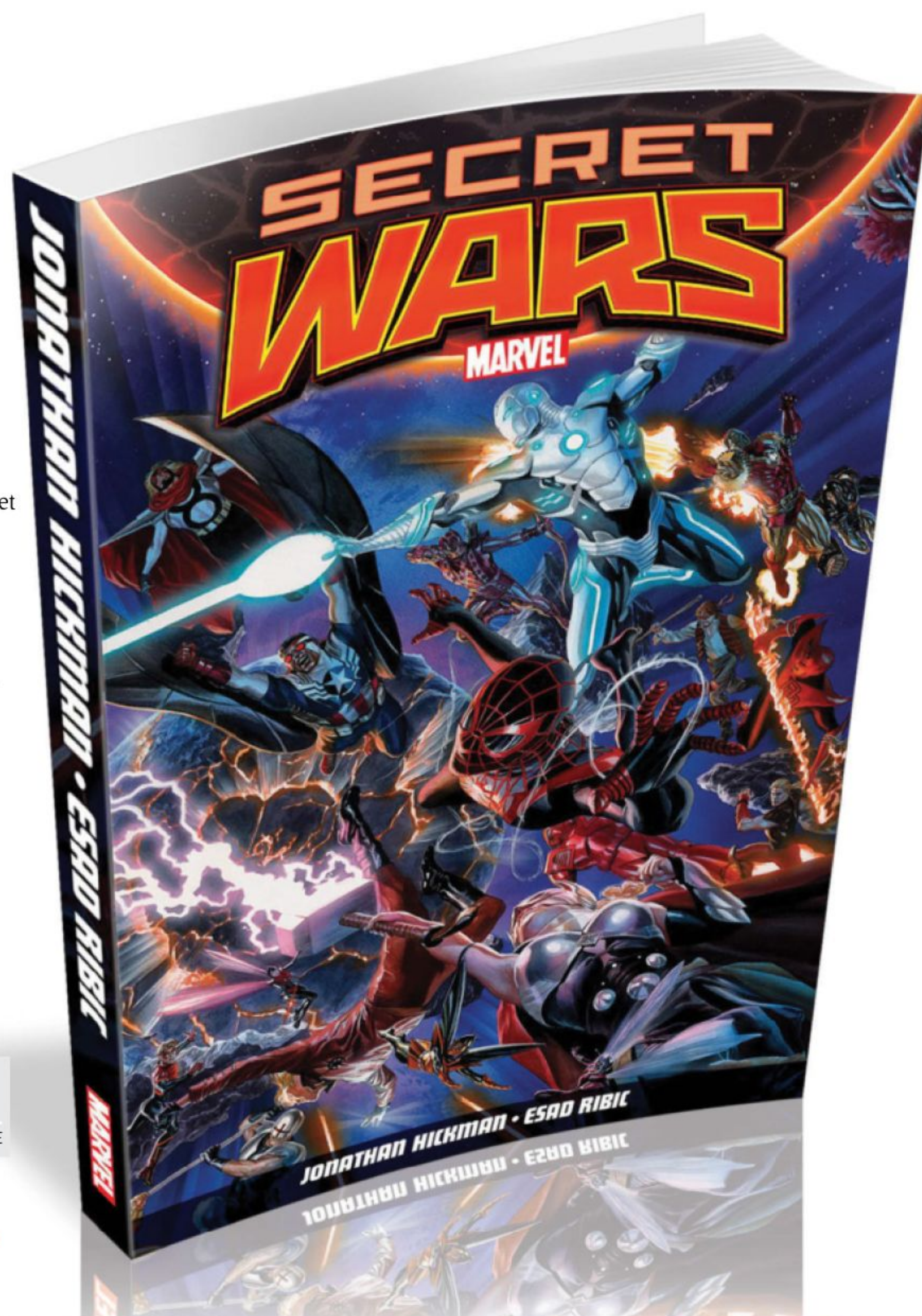
It's enough to make you regret how overused the whole 'a picture says a thousand words' mantra is, as it's totally relevant in this case.

So while *Secret Wars* might not be the game-changer it was marketed as – especially since most of the new series seem to have picked up where their predecessors left off, some new faces and subtle status quo changes aside – it definitely represents as decent an entry point into Marvel for new readers as it could have been.

Steve Wright

SciFiNow scored **7** for *Secret Wars*
Follow our scores on [JUST A SCORE](#)

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...
House Of M
Brian Michael Bendis/Olivier Coipel
Scarlet Witch gets manipulated into changing reality to a one where mutants are dominant.



Details Writer: Enki Bilal Artist: Enki Bilal Publisher: Titan Comics Price: £25.99 Released: 12 April

THE NIKOPOL TRILOGY

Egyptian god dystopia? Yasss

A French sci-fi classic that was previously unavailable in English, *The Nikopol Trilogy* has now been repackaged in a complete collection. This is a series that has inspired many a sci-fi filmmaker and comics creator alike since its publication in 1980.

Indeed, the Yugoslavian-born Bilal directed his own adaptation

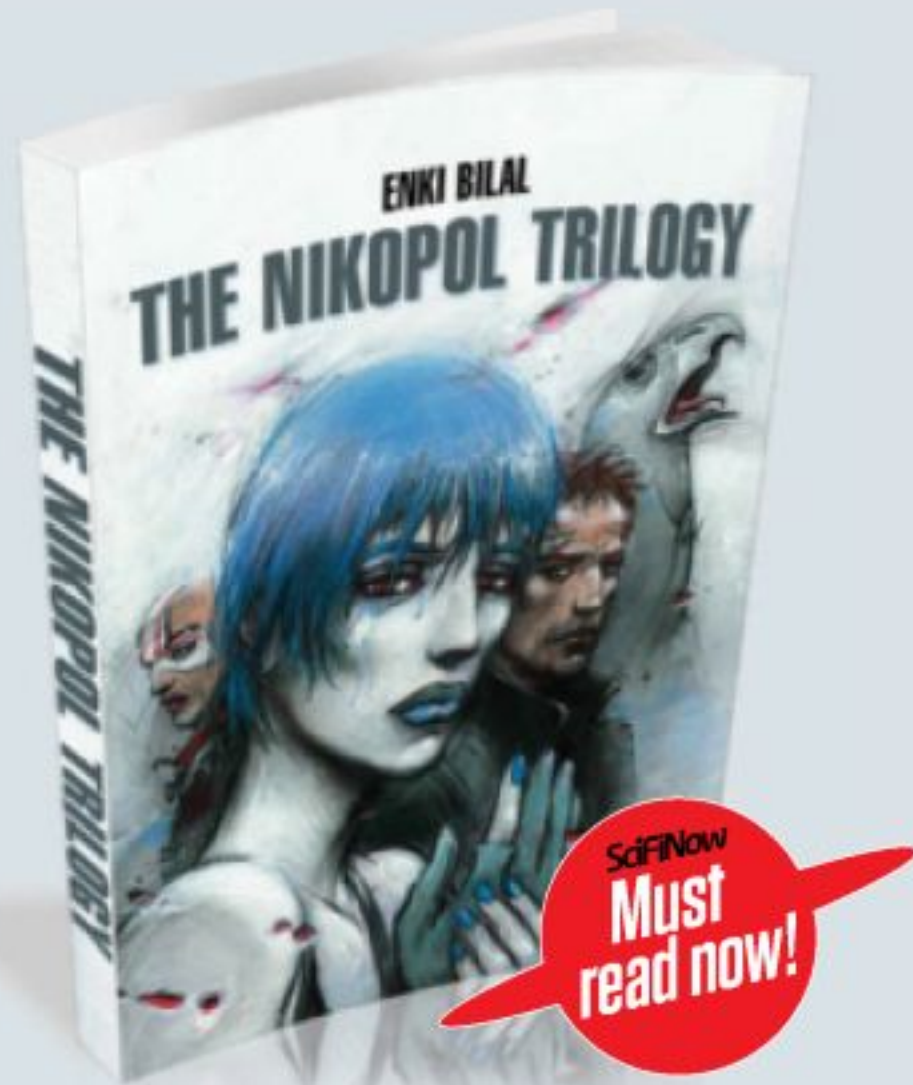
of the comic in 2004, *Immortel Ad Vivam*, which won rave reviews in France but sadly failed to find a much-deserved international release. At last, this masterpiece can be enjoyed in its original form.

Alcide Nikopol returns to Paris in 2023 after a 30 year cryo-sentence orbiting the Earth. His country is not how he remembers it, having survived two nuclear wars and falling under fascist rule.

Add in the reawakening of Egyptian gods – Horus possessing Nikopol's body – and an African city suffering from a freezing micro-climate... well, let's just say this is one unique comic!

Laura Sneddon

SciFiNow scored **10** for The Nikopol Trilogy
Follow our scores on [JUST A SCORE](#)



Details Writer: Grant Morrison Artist: Yanick Paquette Publisher: DC Comics Price: £16.99 Released: 21 April

WONDER WOMAN: EARTH ONE

Back to bondage basics

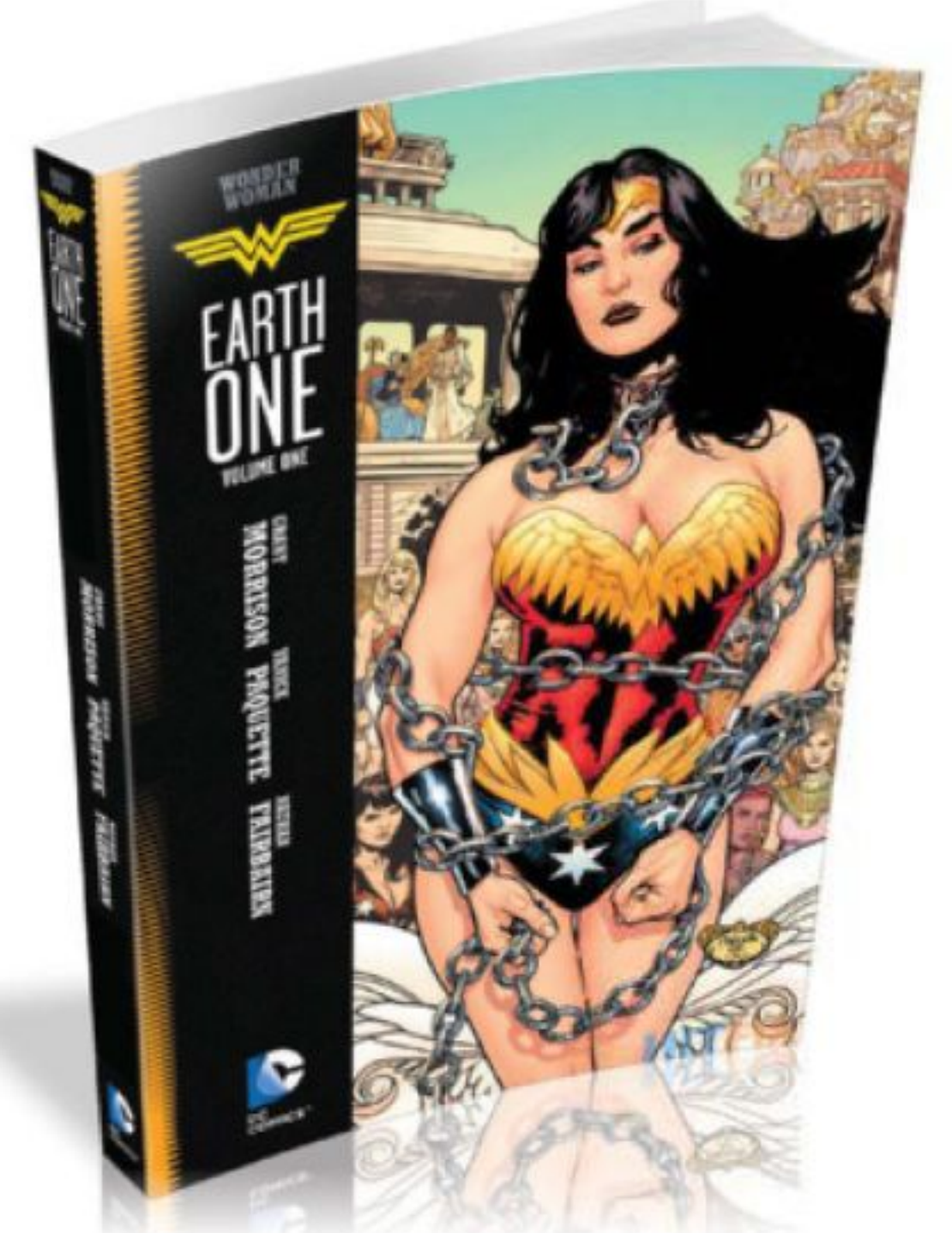
Grant Morrison's long-awaited take on the origin of one of our most iconic superheroes takes Diana back to her roots, which is quite possibly why it is going to shock a lot of people!

Over the years, Wonder Woman has been re-styled and re-tooled for each generation – a constant dilution of her original core values in favour of keeping up with her male counterparts as they hit their grim strides.

But her creators, William Moulton Marston and Elizabeth Holloway Marston, were proponents of 'loving submission'; Marston's belief that the world would be a better place if men would just submit to strong and alluring women. This was immortalised in the pages of *Wonder Woman*, with physical submission and bondage appearing in almost every comic.

Morrison deliberately runs with that theme, exploring what an all-female society such as Themyscira – Wonder Woman's home – would really be like after 3,000 years away from the men who had wrought such tyranny upon them. Marston's wrestling and bondage play has a starring role, alongside a whole civilisation built upon the female image – there is no phallic imagery here.

Moving swiftly from the history of the island to the present day, the book leaps



forward to the trial of Diana Prince to answer the charges laid against her. Her crime? Consorting with man's world!

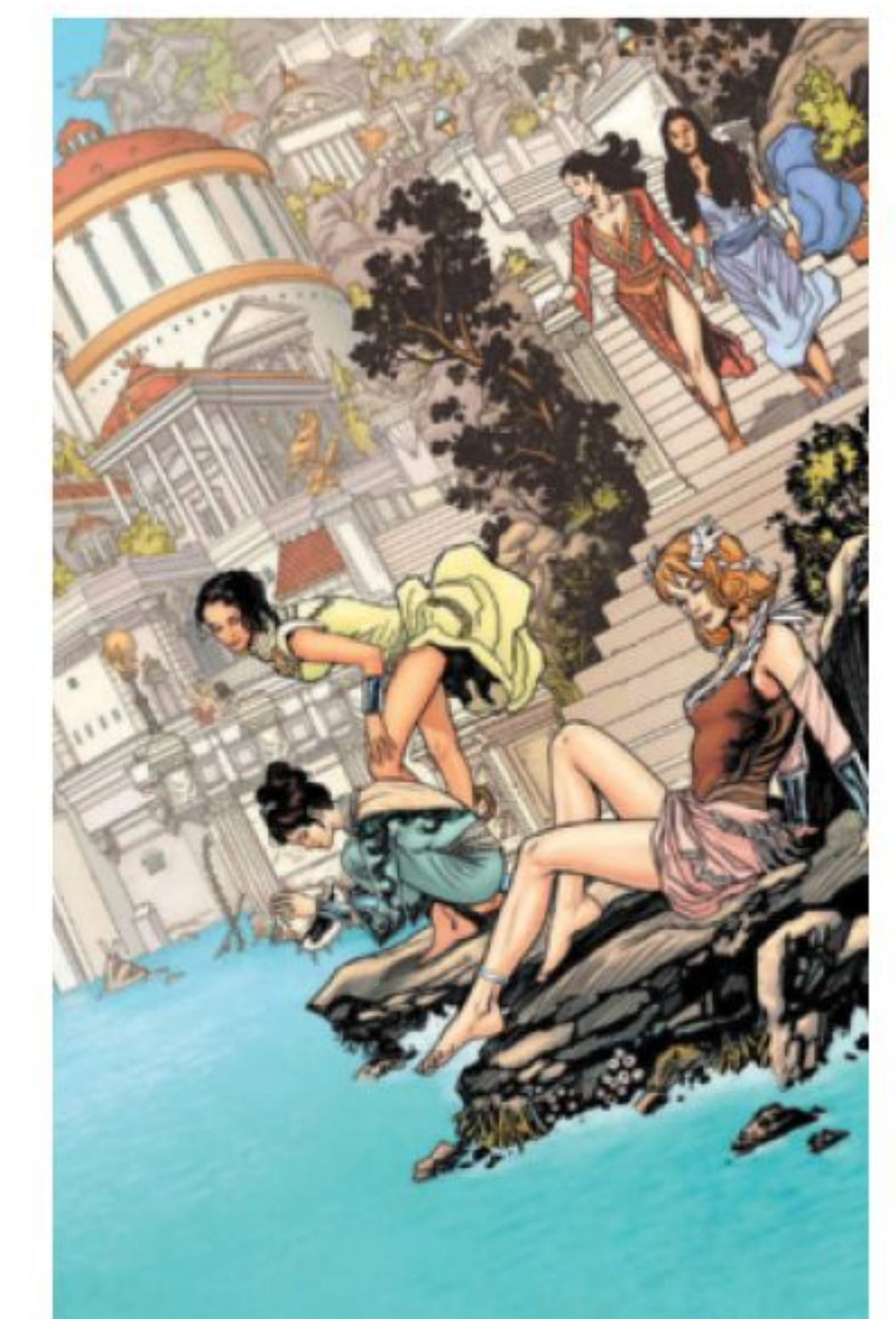
Paquette's art is supremely smooth with a vintage styling that recalls the earlier *Wonder Woman* adventures, while the layout is playful and challenging. Making the most of those familiar motifs – meandros, ropes, stars, chains – they encroach upon the panels, subtly underlining power placement and perspective.

Review copies have already offended some, but this is ideal for vintage *Wonder Woman* fans old and new.

Laura Sneddon

SciFiNow scored **7** for Wonder Woman: Earth One
Follow our scores on [JUST A SCORE](#)

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY...
The Little Book Of Wonder Woman
Paul Levitz
Some lovely golden age collections do exist, but this is a great, concise and inexpensive option!



Details Writers & Artists: Alessandro Barbucci, Barbara Canepa Publisher: Titan Comics Price: £25.99 Released: Out now

SKY DOLL: DECADE

A rare beauty

The much-loved *Sky Doll* series has been collected together for the first time in English, and the world rejoices! Created by two renowned Italian artists, best known for their work on fantasy comics *WITCH* and *Monster Allergy*, this is a distinctly more adult affair.

Noa, an artificial wind-up Sky Doll, has been created only to provide pleasure, but finds both

liberation and adventure in quick succession. The unusual hero soon discovers that she has a much bigger part to play in the future of her world than ever suspected, thanks to befriending an agent of the state who sympathises with her clockwork plight.

The papacy of Lodovica rules supreme in a dystopia of spiritual and sexual perversion, and while erotic designs and depictions are plentiful, this is far from a shallow read. It is beautiful, with gorgeous pages – a real feast for the eyes.

Titan's hardback contains the first three albums and lots of extras, including 40 pages of artistic tributes from comic stars. Take note though – adults only!

Laura Sneddon

SciFiNow scored **8** for Sky Doll: Decade
Follow our scores on [JUST A SCORE](#)





BOOK CLUB

Alex Paknadel



ARCADIA FIRE

Alex Paknadel, the new comics superstar, reveals his digital utopia

WORDS LAURA SNEDDON

DEBUT WRITERS DON'T OFTEN MAKE THEIR ENTRANCE WITH A BANG, BUT THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT ALEX PAKNADEL HAS DONE. OR PERHAPS MORE ACCURATELY, with a boom. Alongside artist Eric Scott Pfeifer, Paknadel has created a new sci-fi comic series at Boom Studios that is genuinely innovative and fresh, having garnered rave reviews and given the world of comics a major shakeup.

The biggest rising star in comics sat down with us to talk all things *Arcadia*.

How would you describe the plot of *Arcadia* and where it came from?

A viral pandemic has wiped out most of the world's population, leaving only 150 million survivors. However, around 4 billion people's minds were digitally copied at the point of death and uploaded into a utopian simulation codenamed 'Arcadia'. Over time, the relationship between the two worlds – virtual and real – has deteriorated. The virtual world's energy demands are enormous, creating tremendous resentment out here in the real world.



When the first death – which is technically impossible – takes place in Arcadia, it sets both worlds on a collision course.

The idea really emerged from my work in digital media. The blind faith that technology will solve all of our problems is magical thinking of the highest order, and that scares me. I like writing about things that scare me, so...

Was it difficult to balance the multiple story threads in *Arcadia* and refrain from too much textual exposition?

I had a lot of sleepless nights over this, yes. If anyone thinks I'm sitting here patting myself on the back, I don't think I pulled it off. As a new writer it's hard not to be a control freak, and I think *Arcadia* suffered slightly as a result. I'm still immensely proud of it, but I should have trusted Eric to let the story breathe a bit more.

What influenced *Arcadia*?

[JG] Ballard is front and centre. I did my English Lit PhD on him a few years ago, so his themes are seared into my brain. You'll



Political guns blazin' Fancy some more SF with a political flavour?



Roche Limit
(Image Comics)
Michael Moreci,
Vic Malhotra
A billionaire

promised to lead the world to the stars, but 20 years later his colony sits on the cusp of a mysterious anomaly, corrupted by crime and awful secrets.



The Private Eye
(Panel Syndicate)

Brian K Vaughan, Marcos Martin, Muntsa Vicente
It's 2076, and the Cloud has burst, revealing everyone's private data to all and sundry. The internet is dead, and people hide behind very real masks.



Descender
(Image Comics)
Jeff Lemire,
Dustin Nguyen

TIM-21 was created to act like a real little boy, but when androids have been outlawed and he and his dog are discovered this heart-warming pair is pitted against humanity.



Letter 44
(Oni Press)
Charles Soule, Alberto Albuquerque, Guy Major

The newly elected president of the USA opens a letter from his predecessor explaining the warlord policies of his office – an alien ship is in orbit and Earth must be ready for any potential threat.



Invisible Republic
(Image Comics)
Gabriel Hardman,
Corinna Bechko,
Jordan Boyd

A regime has fallen, a far-flung planet is in chaos, and the status of the overthrown leader a mystery. That is, until a reporter digs up some diaries.

also find traces of *Limbo* by Bernard Wolfe, *The Futurological Congress* by Stanislaw Lem, *The Dispossessed* by Ursula K Le Guin, and pretty much everything by Grant Morrison. I didn't always succeed, but I tried to follow Morrison's lead in terms of burning through my best ideas in under a page. There's something inherently freeing about taking an idea you could flesh out and just tossing it over your shoulder like you've got a million more up your sleeve. You haven't of course, but it's lovely to think that way – until the panic sets in!

How did you balance the two versions of Lee, and was it a deliberate choice to have quite a diverse cast?

The two Lees were a real challenge, and I knew only one could be the POV character. I chose the real-world one because he's lost far more than the virtual version, and is just more intrinsically interesting as a result. The virtual guy won the jackpot because he got to keep his family, but he's a deeply flawed, selfish person.

I appreciate the comment about diverse 'casting', but I can still see things I mishandled – badly in some cases. I did my best, but as a straight white guy with a kid and a mortgage I know there are certain areas where the best thing I can do is STFU and get out of the way. Hopefully I'll be able to recognise those areas when I see them.

Do you see *Arcadia* as being comparable to the internet, with those younger than ourselves who have grown up within the constant bubble of social media?

Exactly, yes. Millennials grew up in a connected society and I didn't, so I've always found it hard to separate my healthy scepticism towards cyber-utopianism from my decidedly unhealthy fear of obsolescence. One reason why I wrote the book was to work through that impasse. Now, I feel a bit more confident in asserting that although the democratisation of media occasioned by the rise of the internet is a tremendous gift, the cost of all this disruption is incalculable. Perfectly functional systems are being disrupted every day for no good reason, and the people who suffer – 'the disrupted' – don't tend to be investment bankers.

What do you have planned next?

Turncoat #1 by myself and Artyom Trakhanov is out now. It's a bit of an oddity in that it's a *post-alien* invasion story. We pick up the story after the aliens have already left. It's about postcolonial trauma and the nature of freedom. Also guns!



Arcadia will be out on 3 May.

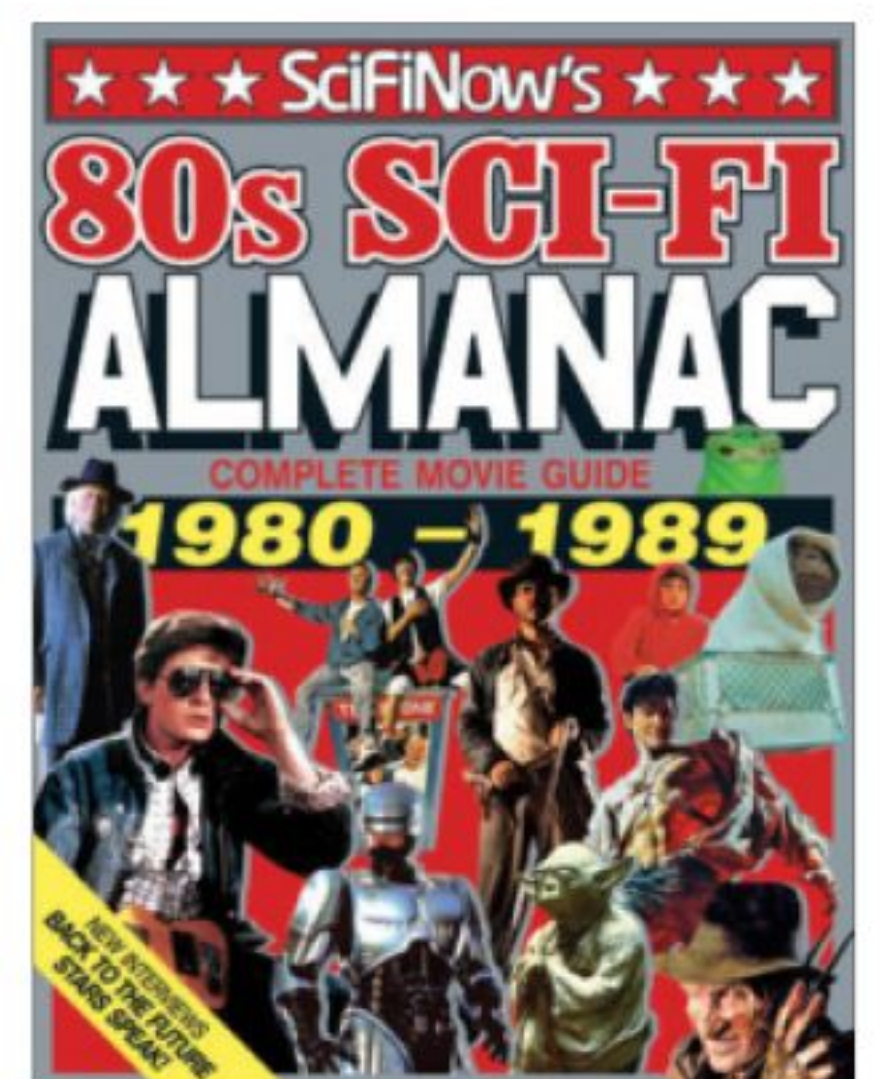
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COMPLETE GUIDE

TANK GIRL

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QUIZ BATTLESTAR GALACTICA BEGINS

IMPRESS ALL OF
KOBOL WITH YOUR
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AN IMAGINE
MONTHLY





THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO TANK GIRL

AFTER 28 YEARS OF COMICS, ONE HOLLYWOOD CULT HIT AND INFINITE ANARCHY, TANK GIRL IS STILL GOING STRONG...

WORDS LAURA SNEDDON

It's 1988. Margaret Thatcher has just become the longest serving prime minister of the century, the first Comic Relief event has been held, Wimbledon have won the FA Cup, and over in Australia kangaroos have moved on from destroying crops to snogging farmers and burning their kids.

Or at least they had in the post-apocalyptic wasteland created by young writer Alan Martin and pre-Gorillaz-fame punk artist Jamie Hewlett; a futuristic and anarchic setting for a comic called *Tank Girl*. The Iron Lady had been famously photographed in a tank just two years previously, but the two Sussex lads unveiled an enemy of the establishment that would have an even greater iconic legacy.

"The late, great 2000 AD artist Brett Ewins came to our art college in Worthing and gave us a lecture on working in comics," explains Martin. "We gave him a copy of our home-made fanzine *Atom Tan*, which he took away with him. In the fanzine was a one-page advert for a character named Tank Girl that Jamie and I had slammed together to fill a page. A year later, Brett was preparing to launch *Deadline* – a new comics/media/music magazine, that he had created with fellow artist Steve Dillon – and he asked us to expand the Tank Girl advert into a full strip. Brett's character Johnny Nemo was originally slated as the figurehead of the magazine, but as soon as they saw Jamie's art for the first story, they decided to put Tank Girl on the front cover of the first issue."

Rebecca Buck, the eponymous rager who never goes by her real name, drives a tank. Her home is her tank. Her life is her tank. All hail the tank. Her bald head, stompy boots and foul-mouthed character grabbed a place in pop-culture history as the figurehead of the notorious Riot Grrrl movement – ie the backlash to the backlash against feminism that embraced queer theory and punk ideology.

The Eighties are often described as a boom time for alternative comics in the United Kingdom, but in truth, adult comics had been around for a while, and these years are mostly notable for producing a newer, younger and more diverse audience. This could only be seen as a success within the industry.

This was the perfect breeding ground for *Deadline*, a brand new counterculture magazine focused on comics and indie music for the angry youths. And when it came to deciding what strips should feature in the first issue, there was no doubting Tank Girl's rightful place.

"When I worked with Jamie on the original *Deadline* stories, there was very little planning," Martin recounts, "usually nothing more than a drunken conversation in a pub – and we would come up with stupid ideas while we simultaneously constructed the script and artwork. These days, because I'm working remotely with artists all around the globe, the production has to be much more traditional, with me writing scripts and sending them out. Within that, we still manage to be pretty stupid though."

Tank Girl comics have been published regularly through the decades with a small break following a

**"JAMIE HEWLETT'S
WORK HAS BEEN A
HUGE INFLUENCE
ON ME"**
BRETT PARSONS

slightly disastrous film adaptation, always written by Martin and hosting a pantheon of Britain's greatest artists. Drawing on surrealist techniques – cut-up, stream of consciousness, metafiction, collage – and blending in well with the DIY-zines that were the height of fashion in the early Nineties, it remains a very different kind of comic from the majority of graphic novels on bookshop shelves.

Tank Girl's most recent exploits can be found in *Solid State Tank Girl*, drawn by Warwick Johnson-Cadwell, and her newest adventure with Brett Parsons, *Two Girls One Tank*, is coming soon.

"I've been a fan since I was at art college, a few years behind Hewlett and Martin at Northbrook College of Art, Worthing," recalls Johnson-Cadwell. "I didn't know them then, but I did love a comic full of guns, swears and nasty behaviour: *Deadline*."

"I first discovered Tank Girl when I was around 12 years old, I think," adds Parson. "I grew up near a comic-book museum called the Words and Pictures Museum, owned by Kevin Eastman of [*Teenage Mutant*] *Ninja Turtles/Heavy Metal*. It must have been just before the release of the *Tank Girl* movie, and the museum was having an exhibit of all the artwork from the original comics. From then on I've been hooked! *Tank Girl* and Jamie Hewlett's work has been a huge influence on me."

Ah yes, the movie. A sore spot for many a *Tank Girl* fan, there is no denying that the 1995 film starring Lori Petty brought the character even greater levels of infamy. Petty perfectly embodied Tank Girl, looking almost exactly like Gwen Stefani a full six months before Stefani hung up her all-American apparel in favour of rocking her now signature look. No Doubt on the coincidence there as Stefani also auditioned for the role of Rebecca Buck, but who could blame her?

The film is, sadly, pretty unanimously panned as trash, only loosely based on the comic and mostly remembered for starring Ice-T as a kangaroo. The cast, however, is downright phenomenal, with Petty and Ice-T joined by Naomi Watts, Malcolm McDowell, Ann Cusack and Iggy Pop.

And the soundtrack was banging, assembled by Courtney Love and featuring Björk, Portishead and Magnificent Bastards amongst others. Major plot gaps led to some last-minute animated sequences produced by Hewlett – a must-see for all Gorillaz fans.

Alas, the film tanked, and both Martin and Hewlett have spoken frequently about their unhappiness with an adaptation that simply didn't grasp the disrupted and fragmented nature of the strips. But in the years that followed, *Tank Girl* has become a genuine cult hit with all-new credentials. The book *Cult Cinema* even lists *Tank Girl* as "a 'real' feminist cult film", which isn't bad going for a film that at the last minute had the studio nix a post-coital scene incorporating a prosthetic kangaroo penis.

"The film is a strange beast," Martin concedes. "I hate it because of its appalling script – it looks great, it's just the dialogue that makes me cringe – but it has brought a whole new generation of fans to the comics. ➤

"THAT SHE'S SUCH A PROMINENT FEMALE IS SOMETHING THAT WE'RE HAPPY WITH"

ALAN MARTIN

➤ A huge part of our current comic audience came via watching the movie first, and then digging into the character's history to find that she has this crazy, sprawling past."

It wasn't just Hollywood that was bedazzled by Tankie – she quickly became a symbolic icon of the growing empowerment of women in punk, indie and alternative cultures. All-girl band Fuzzbox dressed as Tank Girl for publicity shots, Tank Girl t-shirts sprang up that celebrated the 1990 Lesbian and Gay Pride March, Wrangler featured Tank Girl in a series of ads in 1991, while bands including Blur and Teenage Fanclub were open about their *Tank Girl* influence.

Just three years after her first appearance, *Tank Girl* was being published across Europe, as well as in South America, Japan and the US. Movie exploits aside, Tank Girl subsequently acquired a new clutch of celebrity fans, including Adam Ant, New Order and The Ramones.

When *Vogue* caught up with the 'Bad Girl Fashion' that had hit the streets, it cited *Tank Girl* as a crucial influence. Model Sarah Stockbridge, a favourite of Vivienne Westwood, portrayed Tank Girl for *Elle*, *Time Out*, *Select* and *The Face*. And that's a lasting legacy – designer Henry Holland pointed to *Tank Girl* as influence for his late 2015 collection, and Petty mode Tank Girls are a favourite cosplay choice. The Tank Girl effect is everywhere, not least in the artists who have since inked her exploits after Hewlett moved on.

"All the *Tank Girl* artists are favourites of mine to some extent or other," says Johnson-Cadwell. "Then there are the 2000 AD artists I grew up with, particularly Mike McMahon and Kevin O'Neill. So then that's a



Jamie Hewlett's early art contains just a hint of Gorillaz.

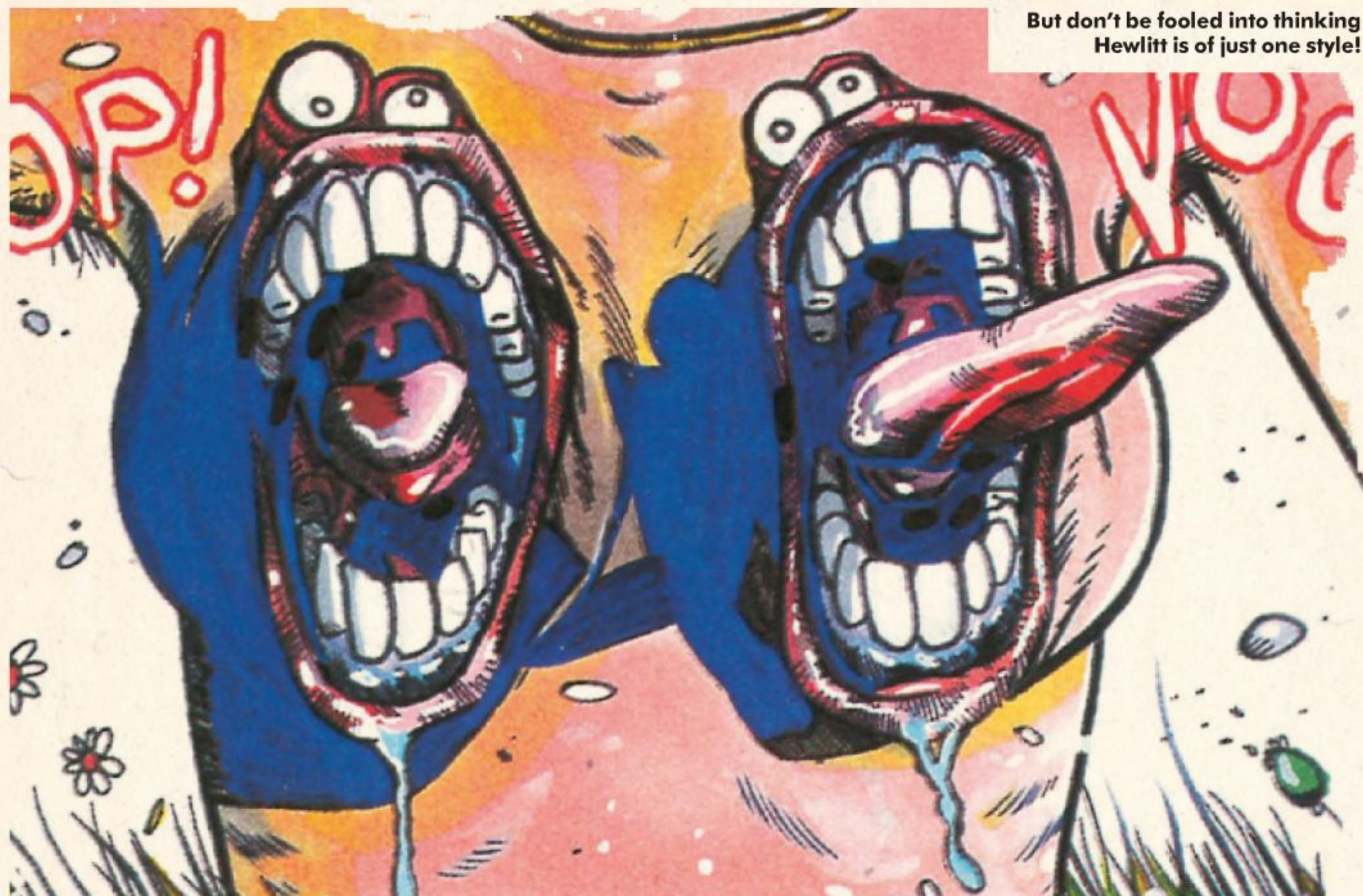
double score for McMahon, who has done both. He is a constant inspiration."

"At the top of the [influence] pile would probably be Hewlett, Simon Bisley, Jack Davis, J Scott Campbell, Don Bluth, Robert Crumb and Sam Kieth," Parson muses. "Then things like *Ren And Stimpy*, *Mad Max*, Russ Meyer and Ralph Bakshi movies too."

So who is Tank Girl? The first comic opens with a kangaroo gang en route to break up a barby. Sporting belt buckles that spell 'crap', swilling beer and swinging guns, the 'roos descend on a celebrity barbecue ready to cause violence and mayhem. Nearby, a silhouetted figure stands in the shadows of a cave, bearing teeth and lazily drawing on a cigarette.

The crowded, cramped black and white panels of angular lines and grotesque characters give way to the 'CLANKY-CLANK-YOWZA!' of a tank plunging from a cliff into the fray below, mutilating and murdering 'roo ➤

But don't be fooled into thinking Hewlett is of just one style!



ROOTS ROCK RIOT!

More riotous grrrls

LOVE AND ROCKETS: MAGGIE THE MECHANIC

(Titan)

Jaime Hernandez

The proto-*Tank Girl* and one of the greatest stars of the multi award-winning *Love And Rockets* series, Maggie and her girlfriend, Hopey, make for the greatest Hernandez strips. Punk sci-fi at its best!

STARSTRUCK

(IDW)

Elaine Lee, Michael Wm Kaluta, Lee Moyer

The greatest science-fiction comic ever created, *Starstruck* remains a somewhat undiscovered gem, despite pioneering many of the techniques that the later *Watchmen* is credited with. An epic space opera that will seriously stretch your brain meats.

KILL YOUR BOYFRIEND/ VIMANARAMA

(DC Comics)

Grant Morrison, Philip Bond

Both comics are classics from Morrison's early days, the latter critically acclaimed and the former full of anarchic and gun-toting teenage vigour. Channelling *Heathers*, this has only recently been reprinted – the initial year of publication was just one year before Columbine.

HOPELESS SAVAGES: GREATEST HITS 2000-2010

(Oni Press)

Jen Van Meter, Christine Norrie et al

Zero's parents are punk superstars Dirk Hopeless and Nikki Savage, who have retired to comfy suburbia. When her parents are kidnapped though, she has to round up her goth sister Arsenal, neo-mod brother Twitch, and track down their estranged brother Rat, who rebelled against his parents in the only way he could think of – going corporate.

THE COMPLETE WIMMEN'S COMIX

(Fantagraphics)

Trina Robbins et al

Alternative comix weren't exactly a barrel of laughs for women in the early days, as money didn't determine which male artists stuck to their sexist guns. In 1972, *Wimmen's Comix* was born – a haven for ten women cartoonists to let loose their pens and subvert the medium. Newly collected for 2016.



TANK GIRL

➤ and celebrity alike. Out steps Tank Girl, all shaven head and demented expression – a female Spider Jerusalem with goggles and plasters, grinning at the one surviving kangaroo, the gang leader, as he runs for his life.

"Geez, how come I can hear everything he's saying?" she turns to the reader as he legs it over the horizon huffing and swearing. "Must be something to do with comics and all that crap!"

Catching the 'roo, one Rocky Deadhead, after the two climb a mountain and collapse in exhausted and hysterical laughter, the two are soon snogging. After a quick shag, Deadhead grins at his good fortune before Tank Girl blows his brains away with her gun. She is a bounty hunter after all. That unexpected ending and meta commentary is perhaps why Tank Girl has outlasted so many of her alternative comix peers.

"She's a strong, highly recognisable female character – there aren't many to choose from," reckons Martin. "If there were more, Tank Girl would probably have drowned in a sea of ripped tights, spiky hair, target t-shirts, and baseball bats years ago."

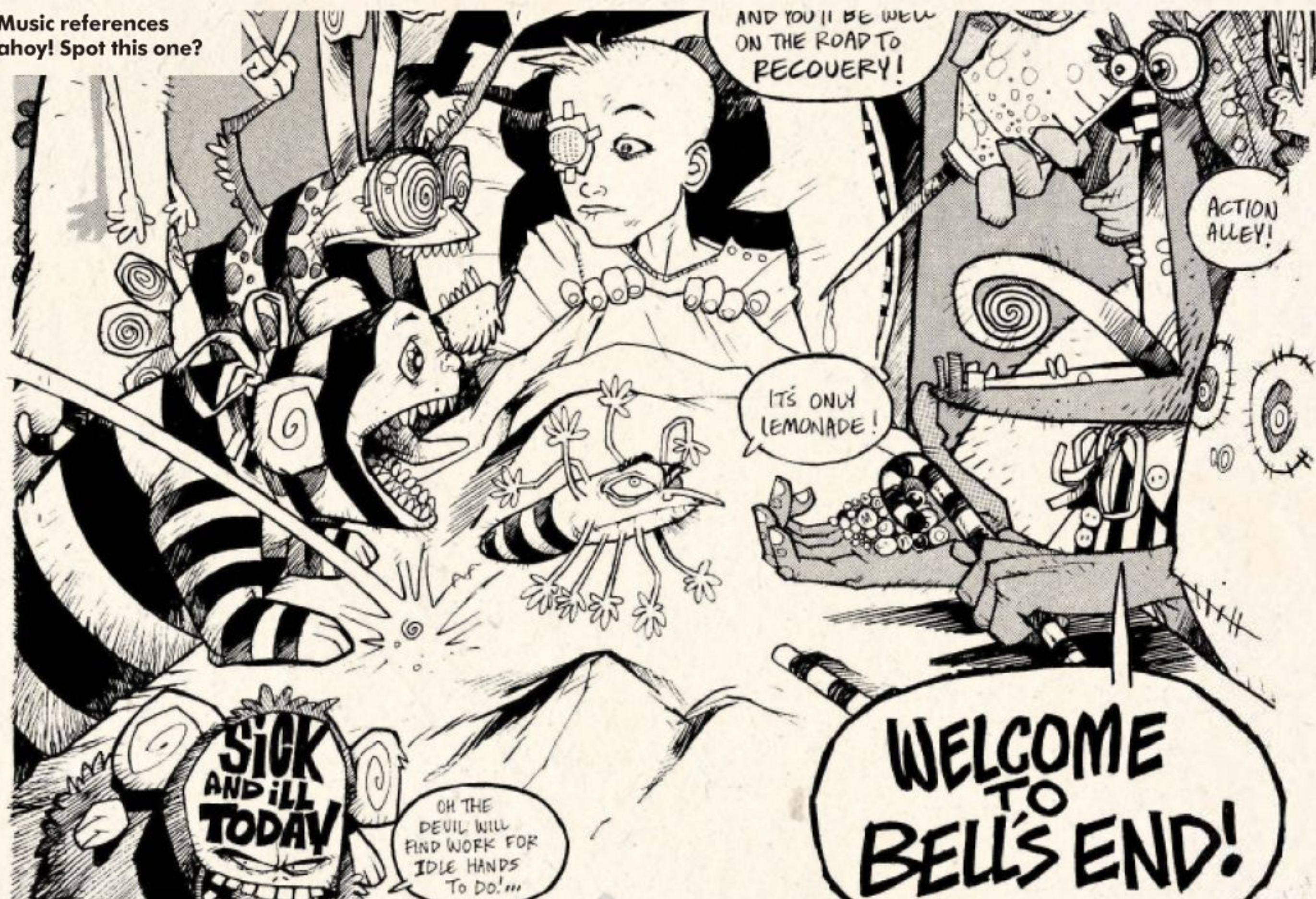
"She's a true badass!" Parson grins. "She's confident, hilarious, sexy, raunchy, violent... everything you could want from a comic, right?"

"Lots of people think she's ace," agrees Johnson-Cadwell. "It may be from the comics they read, it might be for the film, but she is a memorable character. And her adventures, as crazy as they may be, are rooted in the day to day. There's no canon to get crushed under or excluded from; it's her character that people can quickly recognise and enjoy... maybe admire?"

In her second strip, Tank Girl was given the top-priority mission of delivering colostomy bags to the 92-year-old President Paul Hogan of Australia, but when she encounters a tank-jacker en route the ensuing literal shitstorm sees her cast as an outlaw forever more.

Tank Girl didn't feature much in the way of conventional plot or committed narrative as it held

Music references
ahoy! Spot this one?



firmly to the slippery spirit of anarchy, and her creators perhaps didn't envision her turning into the pop culture and political icon she almost immediately became.

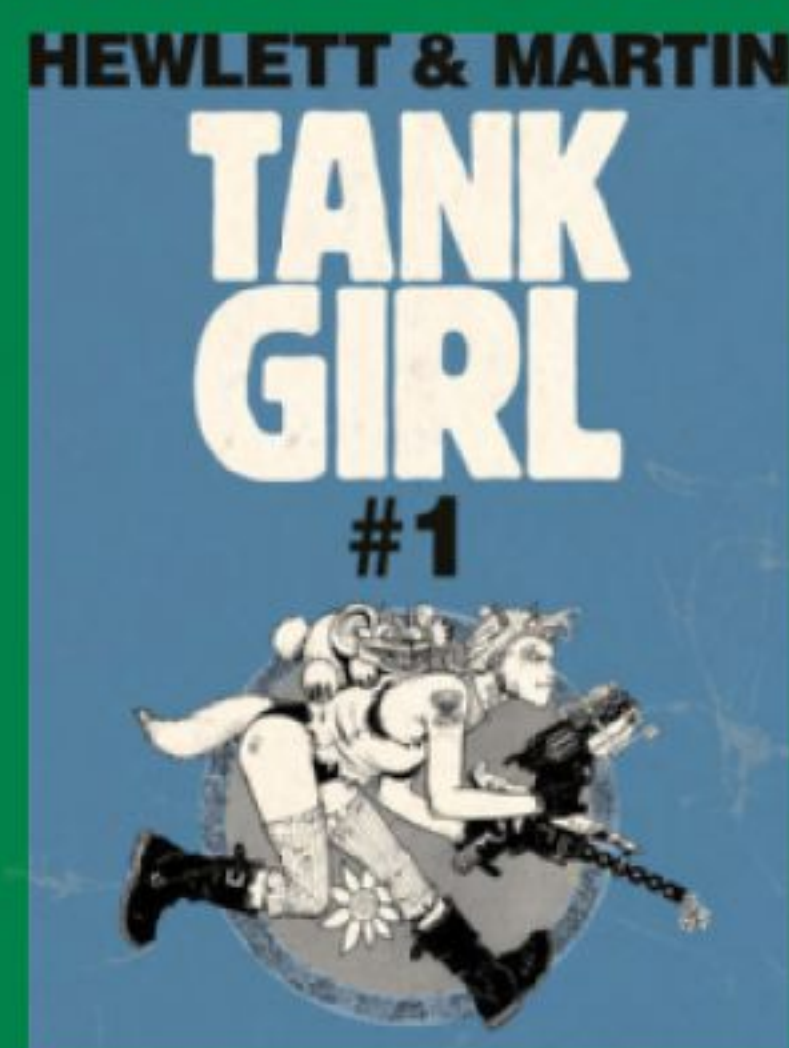
Protests against Thatcher's Clause 28, the homophobic amendment that prevented local authorities from 'promoting' homosexuality, used Tank Girl as their literal poster girl. Appearing on t-shirts and underpants alike, Tank Girl was the face of resistance against the hated clause – which was eventually repealed across the UK in 2003.

"Apart from the Clause 28 thing, we've never attached Tank Girl to anything specific," states Martin, "it's too defining to the character to put her in that



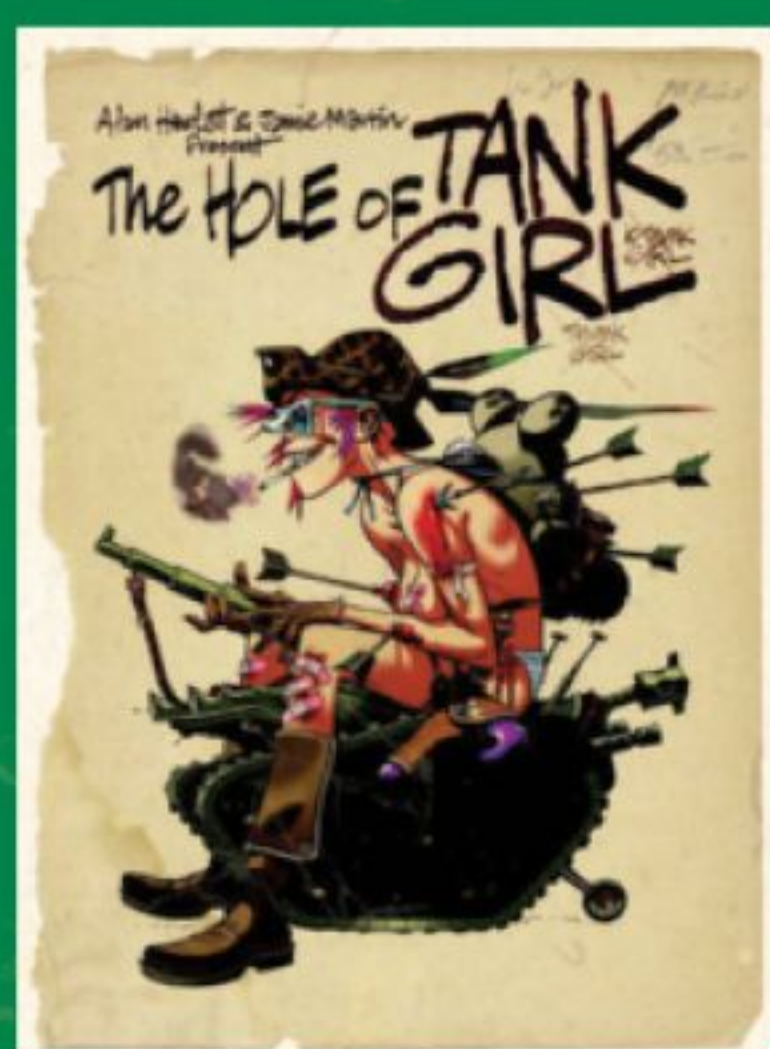
Tank Girl: more hairstyles than David Beckham.

THE TOP 10 TANK GIRL COMICS Where to start with



1. TANK GIRL #1

Jamie Hewlett, Alan Martin
The first in the remastered three-volume series of the original strips, in chronological order and in their original glorious black and white inks – each volume contains a new introduction from Martin and unseen work from Hewlett.



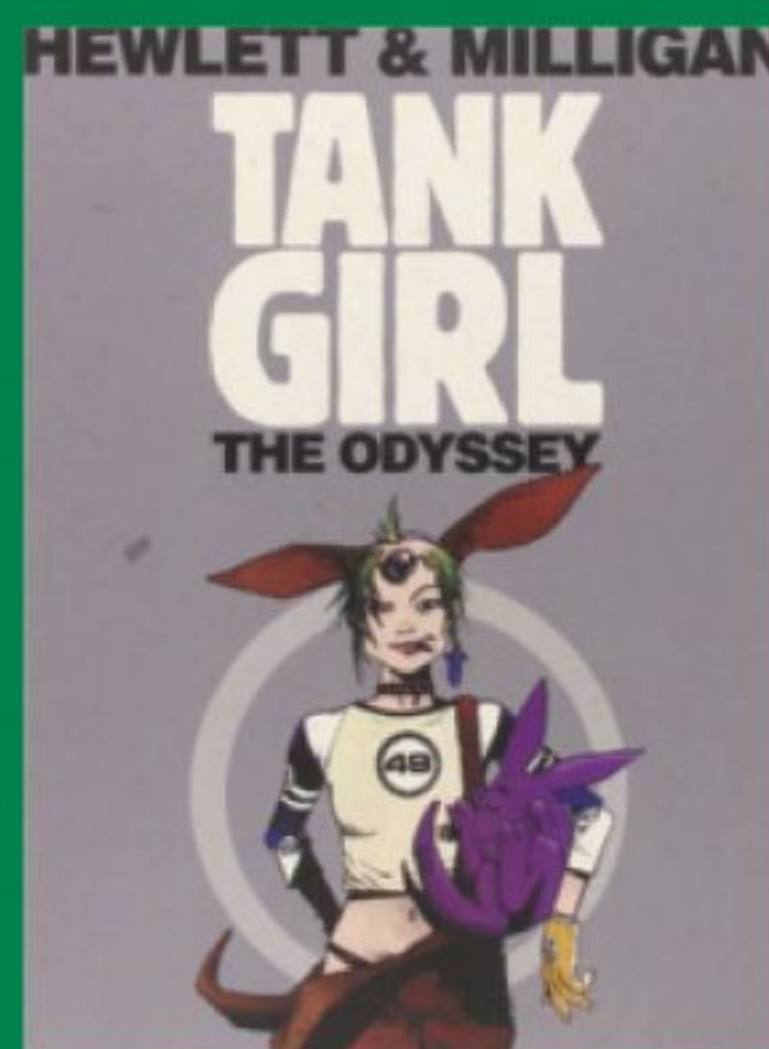
2. THE HOLE OF TANK GIRL

Jamie Hewlett, Alan Martin
Alternatively, splash out on this deluxe slipcase edition of all the original Hewlett and Martin strips, complete with lots of original art, and unseen work old and new from Hewlett.



3. THE POWER OF TANK GIRL

Alan Martin, Ashley Wood, Rufus Dayglo
A nifty omnibus collection of *Tank Girl: The Gifting* (art by Ashley Wood), and *Tank Girl: The Royal Escape* (art by Rufus Dayglo). That's 288 pages of delicious anarchy!



4. TANK GIRL: THE ODYSSEY

Jamie Hewlett, Peter Milligan
Inspired by Homer, *Ulysses* and junk television, the creator of *X-Men* character Doop and acclaimed British writer Milligan penned this for DC Comics. Now remastered and collected in full.



5. 21ST CENTURY TANK GIRL

Martin, Hewlett, et al
Published last year among great hype, this is a collection of all-new strips from Hewlett, Johnson-Cadwell and a whole host of artists, both series stalwarts and newcomers alike.

position, plus I don't think she would do anyone's cause any favours."

Lauded by both the Riot Grrrl movement and prominent LGBT groups, *Deadline's* publisher Tom Astor recalled for *Wired* in 1994 that "in London, there are even weekly lesbian gatherings called Tank Girl nights". Understandably then, Tank Girl is frequently held up as a feminist icon, but that isn't a label that her creators and conspirators are entirely comfortable with, and perhaps for good reason.

"We were never politically motivated with Tank Girl's direction," Martin agrees, "but the fact that's she's such a prominent and disgraceful female is something that we're very happy with. The reason she was created female is that Jamie loves to draw women; he is obsessed with the female form."

"Tank Girl as a feminist icon doesn't really influence my work," Parson muses. "Though her rebellious attitude does, and I think that's what has led her to become so iconic."

"She is celebrated very much as a fun-loving, take-no-shit icon, which is excellent," adds Johnson-Cadwell, "but she's also fucking bonkers and dangerous, which is less healthy!"

Indeed, it's that transgressive thread running through Tank Girl that makes her such a standout character, almost mocking the masturbatory brashness that is embedded within the counter-culture sphere and poking fun at the post-apocalyptic romanticism that still grips us all in *Mad Max* fervour. Made famous by the distinctive style of Hewlett, Tank Girl returned post-movie to reveal that her spark was very much still alive. And the call to work on her strip is a dream for many.

"Alan sent me an email out of the blue one day," reveals Parson. "He had seen some of my

"SHE IS CELEBRATED
VERY MUCH
AS A TAKE-NO-
SHIT ICON"

WARWICK JOHNSON-CADWELL

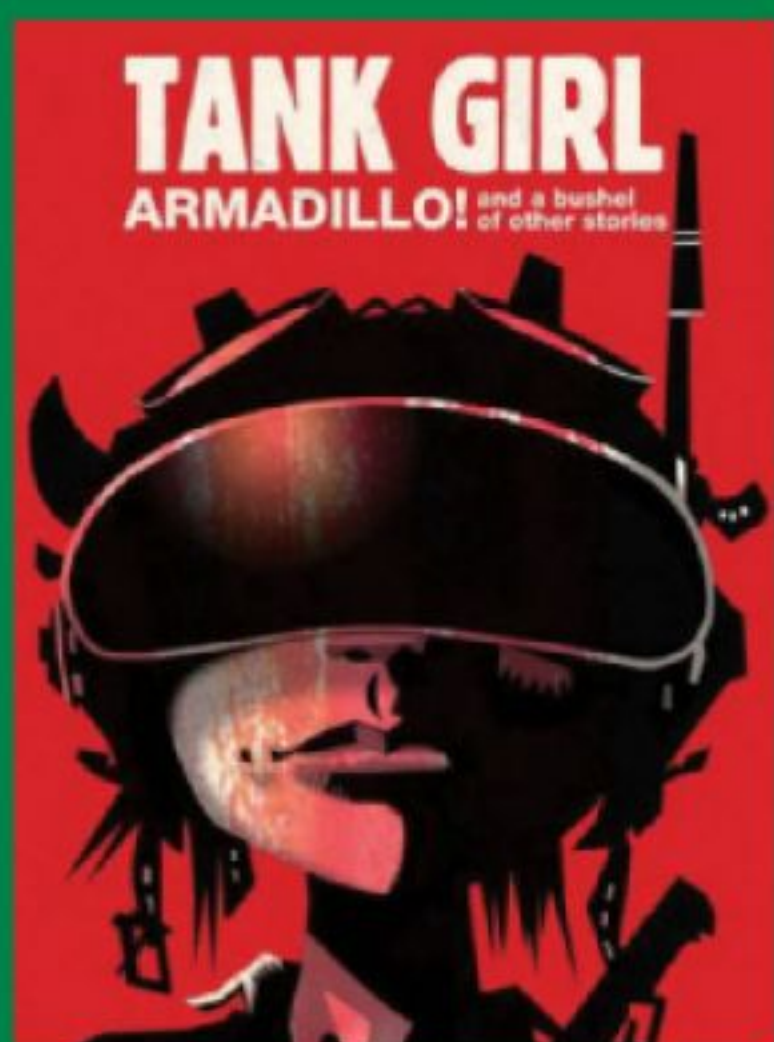
the Australian antiheroine



6. SOLID STATE TANK GIRL

Alan Martin, Warwick Johnson-Cadwell

Fresh from 2013, this comic reunites Tank Girl with Jet Girl, Booga and Barney, and introduces a brand new threat to the fold – Anti-Tank Girl!



7. TANK GIRL: ARMADILLO!

Alan Martin

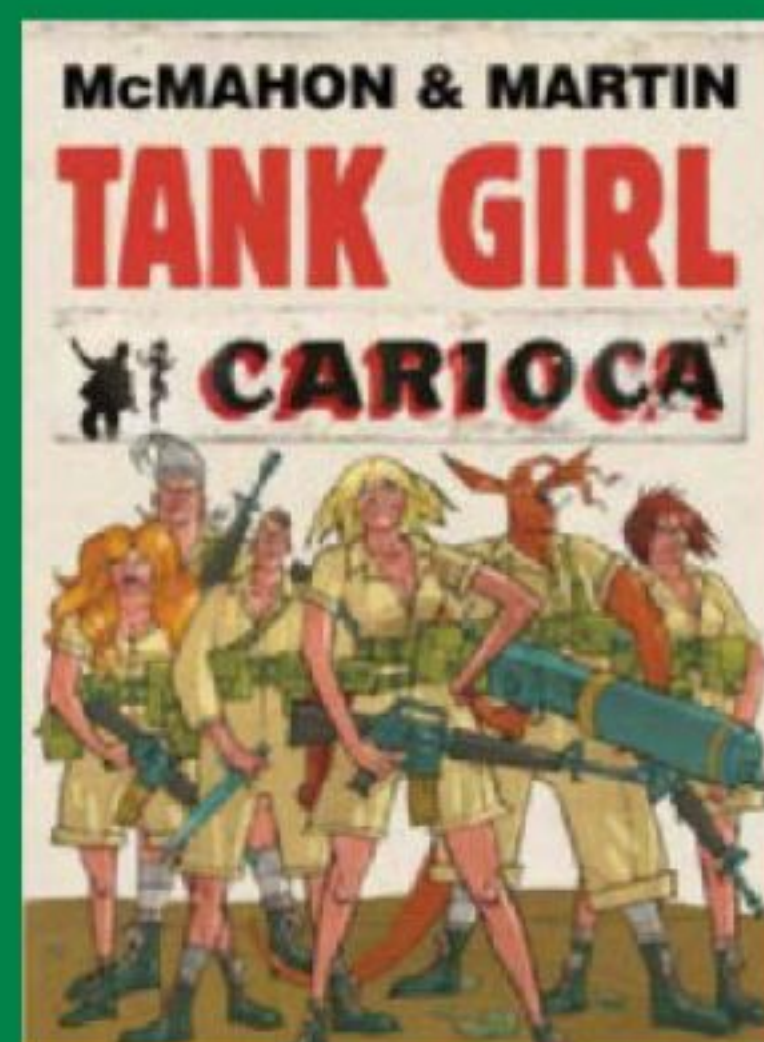
Surprise! It's a novel. This critically acclaimed prose approach nails the rarely achieved goal of adapting a graphic creation to text alone. Contains violence (of course) and time travel.



8. TANK GIRL: BAD WIND RISING

Alan Martin, Rufus Dayglo

Dayglo's style is a real selling point for the more modern Tank Girl, and the plot here is pretty explosive – car chases, murder, earthquakes, heists, and the mandatory gang of killer kangaroos!



9. TANK GIRL: CARIOCA

Mike McMahon, Alan Martin

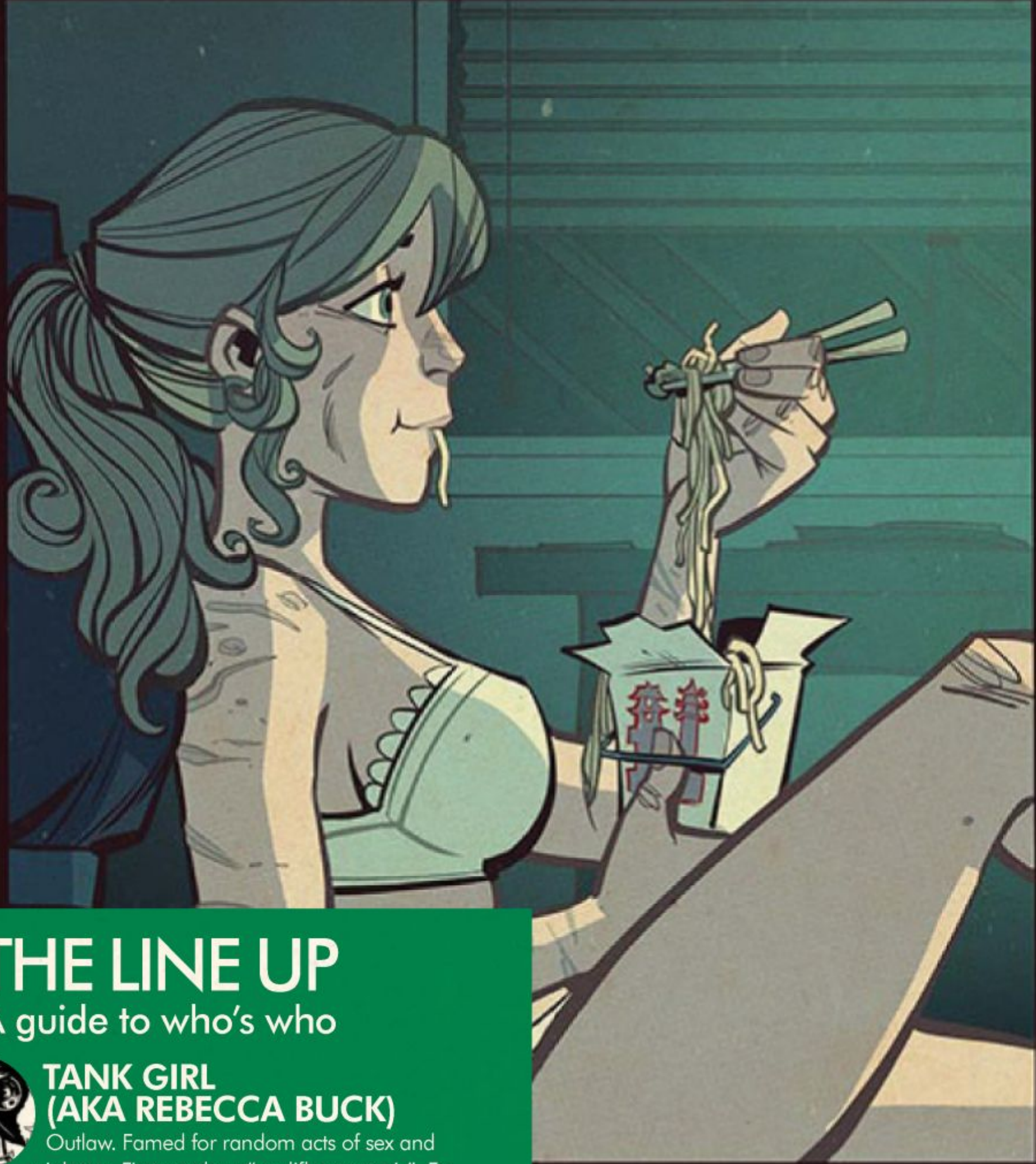
Legendary *Judge Dredd* artist Mike McMahon takes art duties here, as Tank Girl, Booga and their friends plot the death of a vulgar game-show host who snubbed her on television.



10. THE CREAM OF TANK GIRL

Jamie Hewlett, Alan Martin

The must-have coffee-table book for fans, this is a gorgeous guide to *Tank Girl*, and is fit to burst with unseen artwork, rare comic strips, every Hewlett cover, script samples and more.



THE LINE UP

A guide to who's who



TANK GIRL (AKA REBECCA BUCK)

Outlaw. Famed for random acts of sex and violence. First words = "cauliflower penis". Ex-bounty hunter. Hair and clothing can and will change at random.



TANK

Has a girl in.



BOOGA

Mutated kangaroo and Tank Girl's besotted boyfriend. Huge fan of Dame Edna, and previously a successful toy designer. Will do anything Tank Girls tells him. *Anything.*



CAMP KOALA

A gay koala-shaped stuffed toy, described as the "Jeremy Thorpe of comics". Dies tragically playing hand-grenade baseball, but returns as a guardian angel. The only character TG admits to loving. Often sports a pierced ear and a foul mouth.



SQUEAKY TOY RAT

Well, the name says it all really.



MR PRECOCIOUS

A tiny mutant animal that has little luck, but some excellent sunglasses. Capable of driving a tank, apparently.



STEVIE

An Aborigine neighbour with wild blonde hair and many helpful family connections. Always up for a larf.



SUB GIRL

Submarine pilot and childhood friend of Tank Girl. Described as "like a beautiful flower floating in the loo." Always up for a heist.



JET GIRL

Jet pilot and fellow BFF of Tank Girl – an exceptional mechanic, but extremely boring to talk to. Self-confessed fan of Rod Stewart.



BOAT GIRL

There may be a pattern here...

➤ work online, including an old drawing of Tank Girl I had done – he asked if I drew comics, and would I be interested in collaborating on something. It was probably the most surreal thing I've ever experienced. To be invited by one of your biggest heroes to work together on one of your all-time-favourite comics... it's the kind of thing you'd daydream about, but it doesn't usually happen."

Riffing on pop-culture staples like *Neighbours*, *Crocodile Dundee* and Keith Chegwin in the early days, usually in rude and raucous gags, the anarchic strip has remained a unique property to work on. "It's very much like an explosion," reveals Johnson-Cadwell. "There's an amount of mulling things over and knocking back and forth ideas. Fairly quiet and gentle, but then there's this monumental shitstorm as things take off and run away with us. Lively, creative and ultimately fun."

"It's a lot of experimenting and having fun," Parson agrees. "Alan's been amazing to collaborate with. He has a very clear idea of where he wants things to go, but is also open to new ideas and artistic freedom."

"I was at first very wary," admits Johnson-Cadwell. "A lot of people love Tank Girl, and for many different reasons it seems. The *Tank Girl* Facebook page has a very enthusiastic and vocal following, but also I was nervous about following the brilliant artists who had drawn her. I decided the best method for me to proceed was to ignore all of them except Alan and get on with it. She, even more than Alan, would lead the way."

"I keep going back and reading the old comics, and try to soak up the vibes," says Parson. "It's a pretty scary feeling, putting your own spin on such a beloved cult character. I kind of just draw, and try not to think about the big picture too hard. Keep my head down, and hope that I don't screw up too bad."

It's noteworthy that the names behind Tank Girl have all been men, which seems an oddity given her



Tank Girl's newest adventure... tankless?!

huge popularity with female fans. Tank Girl's own healthy disrespect for men (and well, everyone) as penned by male creators creates an interesting tension thrumming through the strips; her own sexy and sexual characteristics are intertwined with her rejection of performed sex appeal. Male fantasy, icon of feminism, queer icon – Tank Girl may be 28 years old, but thoughts of retirement are certainly far from her mind.

"She has changed as our lives have changed," Martin notes. "She's no longer 20 and down the pub all day, she's now older and takes her responsibilities more seriously. She's grumpier in the mornings."

With this in mind, what can readers expect next from the mistress of mayhem? "Lots of explosions, tear-jerking drama, and dirty jokes!" says Parson.

"The return of a much-loved character from the world of Tank Girl – who was bumped off back in the early Nineties – will make a comeback," Martin reveals. "But be warned: *2G1T* is a tragedy."

Tank Girl: Two Girls One Tank will be available to buy from 18 May.

I GUESS
THIS WILL HAVE
TO SUFFICE.

STRAP ON
A LARGE PAIR OF GUNS,
CHOOSE YOURSELF
SOME WHEELS AND
GET GASSED-UP.

WE NEED TO GO
AND VISIT **DECAF DAVE**,
SEE IF WE CAN GET A
TIP-OFF ON THE MOVEMENT
OF ANY LARGE AMOUNTS
OF GREEN STUFF!



I'LL TAKE
POINT IN THE
STAGHOUND.



I'LL COVER
YOU FROM THE
MOTORBIKE
AND SIDE-
SALAD!



AND I'LL
BRING UP THE
REAR IN THE...ER...
...SHITTY LITTLE
FAIRGROUND
TANK.

S'MOVE
OUT!

RUMBLE!
RUMBLE!



INTERVIEW

WILL VINTON: CLAYMATION MASTER

WE TALK TO OSCAR-WINNING FX MAESTRO, WILL VINTON, ABOUT HIS CAREER, FROM BRINGING TO LIFE CLASSIC THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN AND WORKING WITH MICHAEL JACKSON ON MOONWALKER TO DEVISING THOSE CREEPY NOMES FOR DISNEY'S DARK CULT CLASSIC, RETURN TO OZ

WORDS OLIVER PFEIFFER

How did you get interested in Claymation?

I first started messing with it just for fun, literally, with some art buddies. We basically set up an animation camera with a six-pack of beer handy, and everyone had a lump of clay to animate with. I was really taken how these lumps of clay we were playing with somehow had a life to them.

Tell me about your Oscar-winning short film *Closed Mondays*...

Bob Gardiner, who was an exceptional sculptor, lived with me, and we put together some experimental Claymation films that culminated with *Closed Mondays*. It was designed to show off some of these techniques that we'd been experimenting with. It was an auspicious beginning for this kind of demo film to win an Academy Award. Not only for us, but also for the animation industry, as it was the first stop-motion animated film to receive a nomination.

Then in 1985 came the full Claymation feature *The Adventures Of Mark Twain*...

We had a 30th anniversary screening at the Portland Film Festival recently. It's amazing; it's really just an adult crowd-pleaser, and looks really good despite its age. It's such an innovative thing, but we were kind of told that we really needed to have more of a kid component. The story concerned the light and the dark side of Mark Twain, which I was quite fascinated by. There's no question that the quality and story issues that concern death [conflict with one another], but that was the kids animation mantra that was going on at that time. We never ever shied away from wanting to do animation that appealed to adults.

The film is sometimes misinterpreted as 'disturbing kids animation', but it's actually quite light-hearted...

Yeah, it's really in the context of a clay-animation movie [laughs]. It's such an abstraction, because you

really have to understand the mysterious stranger and understand his nous point of view and Twain's nous point of view to really appreciate that. With the mysterious stranger, it's a wonderful but very dark vision of mankind and what humanity is like from the point of view of a devil-angel character.

How do you think the films holds up today?

I'm very proud of it, and it is a quite wonderful work of art in some ways. There are so many things about it that are dated, but there are also so many things that were really innovative. It was our take on trying to portray the life of Twain and the works of Twain rather than some folk tale.

You were also working on the Claymation effects for *Return To Oz*. How did you initially come onboard?

Walter Murch saw something in what we were doing that really inspired him. It was a real challenge for a bunch of clay animators, partially because he wanted to see the Nomes as his vision from a child when he read the L Frank Baum books.

What was your brief on the project?

His concept for us was that the Nomes would move in rock – kind of like fish in water – and that they would appear on the surface of the stone. Then when the Nome king gained power he would kind of emerge or evolve and be a real free-standing person.

Producer Paul Maslansky admitted to me recently that he wasn't originally sold on the idea of Claymation...

It wasn't frankly an immediately obvious solution with the Claymation. Paul initially came up and met with us quite dubiously, I think, as did [Star Wars producer] Robert Watts. They were a little bit skeptical, like us, because Claymation sculptures in its nature are kind of round and soft and malleable, and sort of seemed

not intuitively like what rock is – the essence of which is hard, rigid, jagged, none moving... It's a contradiction in terms doing animated rock in what seems like a soft medium. Walter really believed, however. He had a vision and stuck with it.

Tell us a bit about the practical process you went through.

It was a lot of fun. We experimented with some of Walter's ideas, and we started using granite tools and putting impressions in the clay that would pick up the jaggedness and edginess of the stone tools we were using. We threw away the typical use of fingers as a tool because they're too soft. We also discarded typical



Return To Oz saw Will Vinton bring to life antagonistic rock formations via Claymation.



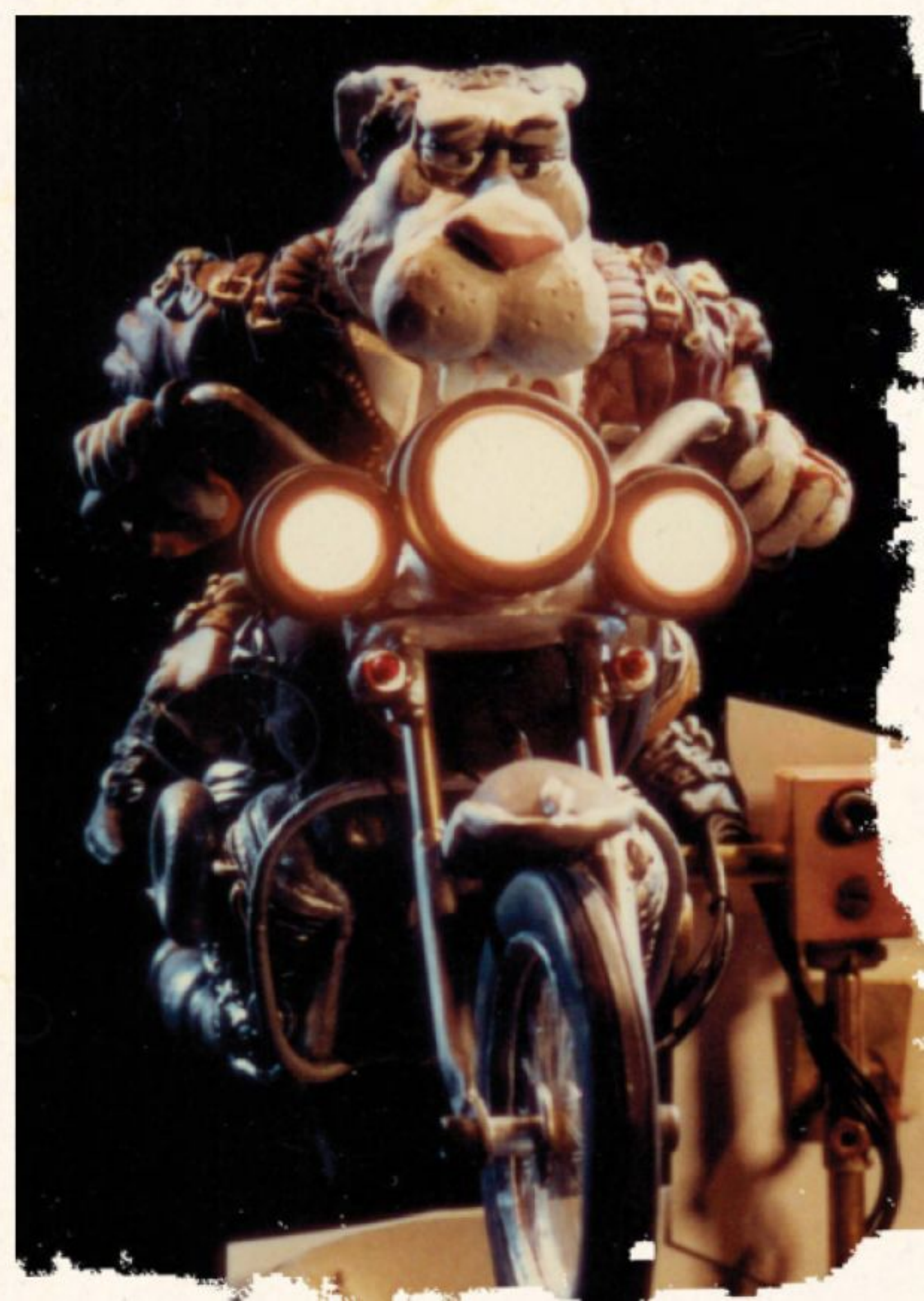
Animator-turned-future Oscar-winning film director Joan Gratz also lent a hand.

All images courtesy of Will Vinton



Animator Bill Fiesterman analyses Nicol Williamson evoking menace as the feared Nome King.

"WE SET UP AN ANIMATION CAMERA WITH A SIX-PACK OF BEER AND CLAY HANDY"
WILL VINTON



4 CLASSIC CLAYMATION MOVIE MOMENTS THE BEST OF WILL VINTON



1. Introducing the Nomes in *Return To Oz* (1985)

Will Vinton was nominated for an Oscar for his work on this belated sequel-of-sorts to the 1939

Technicolor classic. The moment where the Nomes make their first disturbingly voyeuristic appearance in the movie still has the ability to send shivers down the spine, appearing as they do on the surface of rocks to spy on an unassuming Dorothy.



2. Nome King climax in *Return To Oz* (1985)

Back in 1985, there was nothing more unsettling for some than the wrath of the Nome King, played with devilish relish by British theatre

veteran Nicol Williamson. The hellish climax where the antagonist morphs into a monstrous rock formation to torment Dorothy and her friends still has the power to evoke nightmares 30 years on.



3. The Mysterious Stranger in *The Adventures Of Mark Twain* (1985)

Another decidedly dark character, this time from an arguably light-hearted full Claymation feature, the mysterious stranger makes one hell of a chilling impact upon his first ghostly appearance in this children's classic.



4. Michael Jackson turns into Spike Rabbit in *Moonwalker* (1988)

Fleeing from a band of increasingly madcap animated characters on a Hollywood backlot, Jackson takes

refuge in a wardrobe cluttered with gruesome masks. Then, he spots the mask of Spike Rabbit and uses it as a cunning disguise to hide his famous appearance in the thrilling Speed Demon chase chapter of this anthology flick.



Spike Rabbit was Michael Jackson's wacky disguise in *Moonwalker*.

➤ sculpting tools as well, because we found these jagged rocks and things that we could sculpt with at a frame at a time. We did some tests using wrapped mylar reflections to distort the actors' faces, then modelled that look into the clay characters for the Nomes underground. We photographed them and started to play with that through imitation. We also did a shot-reference film of the actors going through the motions. We came up with some pretty cool things, like the idea that yes they animate, but they move, they shift and they kind of lock too.

Was there a point where you were aware of crossing the line with the characterisations becoming too frightening for kids?

I would say that was Walter's thing. I was really into doing entertainment for adults, which was more sophisticated animation. Walter appreciated that, and I think he wanted the film to be more about the memory that he had reading the books as a child, which had horrific elements and scary parts to it without question. He wanted it to be his rather adult and rather intense sense of what the story was like and what the edges of that story was. There were people at the studio that wanted it to be softer.

It's interesting, because this was a period of time in the mid-Eighties where you had children's fantasy films like *The Dark Crystal*, *Legend* and *Labyrinth*, which were kind of sinister as well.

It was certainly a time when we were starting to experiment with how family entertainment could be dark. Like with Mark Twain, who was a very serious writer, who had all these really dark sides. In fact, that's the story [of *Mark Twain*] – there's a light folk-hero side, and then there's this sort of dark side, and they are

in the end represented by two figures: the light Twain and dark Twain, who kind of merge.

In *Return To Oz*, the effects have such a tangible quality to them, which you can't really replicate using CGI, and you were nominated for an Oscar for your work too...

It does have a unique quality – you wouldn't look at that today and go, "Well, they used computer technology!" I feel that *Return To Oz* kind of got bypassed in most of the categories for an Oscar and there were some real deserving areas. However, we got really singled out in a positive way with some reviewers that didn't like the film saying that it's almost worth going just to see the Claymation! It's almost a backhanded compliment, but we were a bit singled out in a positive way. However, again, I think it's a brilliant piece overall.

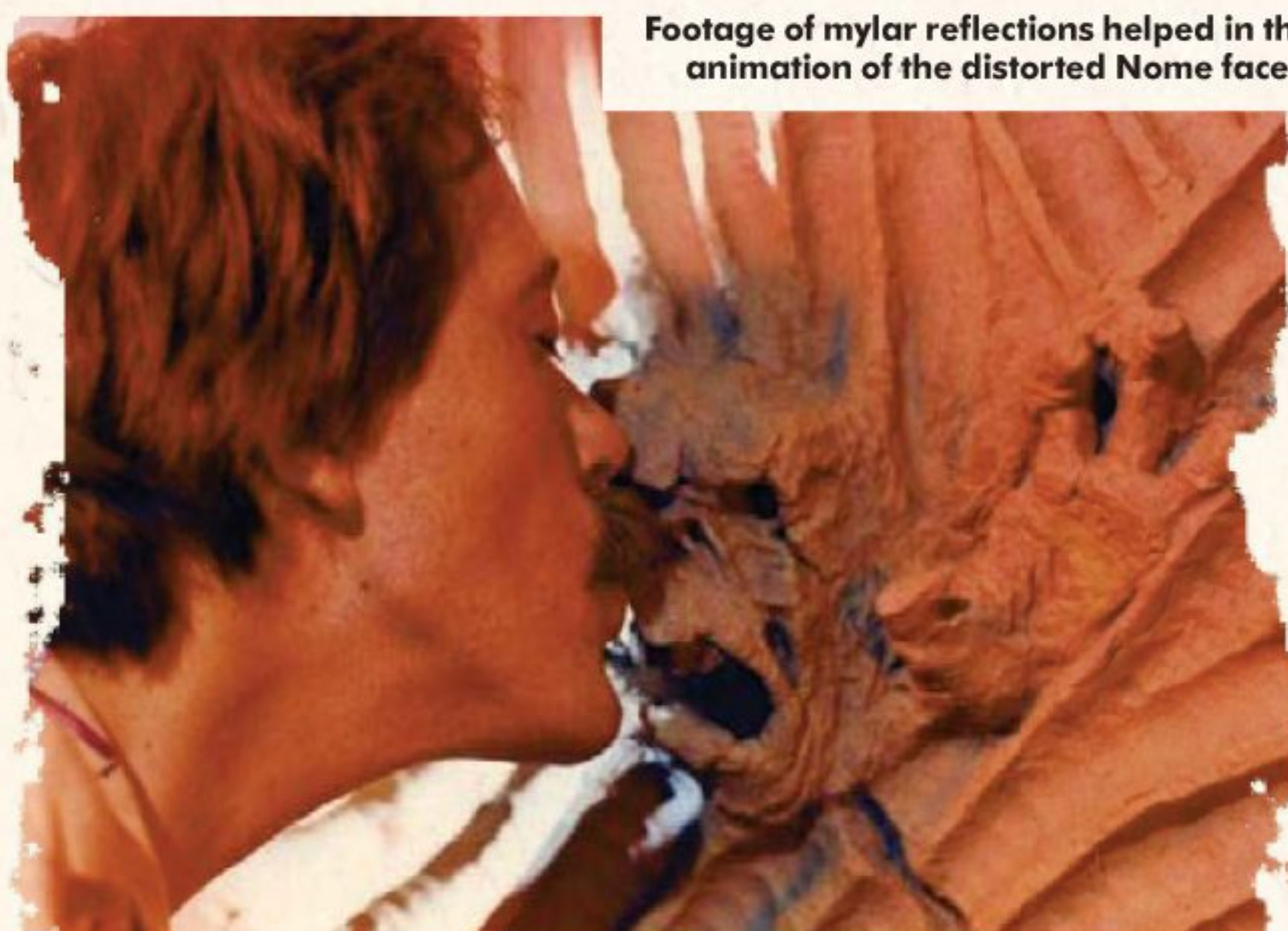
The Nome King had to be molded to the facial characteristics of actor Nicol Williamson. What was it like working on that?

We had to form a cast of his face and then duplicate it so that it was a seamless transition. We didn't want people to be able to go, "Oh that's Nicol the actor" and "Oh, now that's Claymation!" We wanted to blur that line, so we tried to do a couple of things: in some of those transitional moments we gave the actor a lot of the same craggy, rocky stuff we had on the Claymation character and then we used his actual face in Claymation to create some realism. We had perfect prosthetic eyes that matched Nicol Williamson's as well. That was eerie, because we would put it in a craggy clay sculpture, and it would sit there and look at you with these piercing eyes. It was kind of unnerving! [laughs]

What did you think overall about the film *Return To Oz*?

There are times, like in the beginning with the electroshock stuff, where it's a little bleak, and I'm not a really dark film person – I like comedy. Having said that,

Footage of mylar reflections helped in the animation of the distorted Nome faces.



WILL VINTON

CLAYMATION MASTER

I like when we go into Oz, and Walter wanted that to be the case too. He wanted that to be fantasy, wonderful and just the whole kind of Baum circumstance at the very end, which he wanted to be bright and fun. With the Nomes, he wanted them to be something other than just big bad guys. I felt the starkness he gave it with the Kansas scenes back home was perhaps a little shocking. It's more faithful to the Baum books, but most people know the film rather than the books.

You also worked on Michael Jackson anthology music video film *Moonwalker*, where you animated the 'Speed Demon' sequence.

That was really fun. Michael wanted to expand and fit [our Claymation techniques] into the movie, so we came up with the idea of continuing this theme of Michael being chased throughout the movie. Then he turns into Spike Rabbit for the music video, and that was pretty fun to shoot. I got well acquainted with Michael because I even planned some of the [dance] choreographing with him. This was due to the fact that our character had to do some of the same dance moves that he was to do. He was great, and it was really fun just working one-on-one with him. It was a pretty good relationship, and a pretty good project as music videos go.

What are you currently working on?

I'm actually doing a Broadway musical called *The Kiss*. It's a very adult take on *The Frog Prince*, and the music is spectacular. I've always enjoyed music and always enjoyed comedy and the theatre, so this is my first attempt to produce something. It's a project that

I thought would be an animated show initially, and the more I played with it the more I realised it would be perfect for the stage. It's really shaping up and evolving nicely.

Are you looking at more CGI animation now?

Before I sold the studio I did a lot of CG directing. The CG tools are really great. The screenplays that I have developed over the last decade are a mix of some pure CG, but I also have projects that are kind of made for stop-motion. For me, it would probably be 50 per cent computer animation, because the stop-motion dictates the style. The computer is great at mimicking style; including live action, which is remarkable. I'm actually doing a big 3D computer thing with my Broadway show; a pre-visualisation of the entire stage production, and that's really fun, using a whole cast of avatars that you can play with.

You're an advocate for CG technology and combining it with Claymation techniques?

I always think that there's always a right style and therefore a right technical media for every project. There are certain projects that I think scream for one style over another. I feel like the technique ought to come out of the story. The company that I used to have [Will Vinton Studios, which has been re-launched as Laika Entertainment] is really focused in maintaining that stop-motion technique, and that's great as it's such a superb art form, so I'm really delighted about that. ☺

For more information, visit www.willvinton.net.



Animator Doug Aberle creates the fiery demise of the Nome King in *Return To Oz*.



"IT WAS REALLY FUN
JUST WORKING
ONE-ON-ONE
WITH HIM"

WILL VINTON



MANY CHILDHOODS HAVE BEEN FOREVER ALTERED BY LABYRINTH, BUT THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH REMAINS DAVID BOWIE'S DEFINING FILM PERFORMANCE. WE LOOK BACK AT THE BEAUTIFUL, TRAGIC AND BRILLIANT TALE OF A FALLEN SPACE MAN

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL



THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH



Film

RUNNING TIME:

139 minutes

RELEASE DATE:

18 March 1976

DIRECTOR:

Nicolas Roeg

WRITERS: Paul Mayersberg, based on Walter Tevis's book

CAST: David Bowie, Candy Clark, Rip Torn, Buck Henry, Bernie Case

About

Alien Thomas Jerome Newton arrives in New Mexico, sells his wedding ring and heads to New York to create a corporation that will make him hundreds of millions of dollars. Shunning public life, he returns to where he landed and creates a kind of life with hotel maid Mary-Lou. As life on Earth begins to drive Newton insane, he yearns to return to his home. He hires former professor Nathan Bryce to work on a spacecraft, but his business rivals have other plans for him...

Few of David Bowie's film roles have felt as uniquely suited to him as *The Man Who Fell To Earth*. The character of Thomas Jerome Newton seems as if he was written to be played by him, but he wasn't, and that statement almost feels like it cheapens his performance. He may never have been as cannily deployed in a film (with the exception of *Labyrinth*), but *The Man Who Fell To Earth* shows that he was more than just a musician playing at being an actor. He is magnetic, dangerous and mysterious. Most importantly, he is fragile.

The film is essentially a classic sci-fi parable, showing how the human race takes a beautiful gift and squeezes everything it can get from it until all that's left is a crushed, empty shell.

When Bowie passed away earlier this year, many obituaries quite reasonably described him as an alien visitor beyond the simple mention of his intergalactic personas Ziggy Stardust or Major Tom. Bowie's ability to change, shape-shift and push at boundaries not just of music and fashion, but of gender and sexuality while remaining himself, has been a gift to generations of fans as a wonderful example of what is possible. The role of Thomas Jerome Newton, a visitor who draws everyone to him and ends up used and abused by those people, feels like it has a huge part to play in that.

While Bowie has been more overtly sexualised on film, he's never been more beautiful as when shot by Nicolas Roeg. It was the birth of his Thin White Duke persona who would grace the covers of *Station To Station* and *Low*, a

character that he would later describe as an ogre, but here, for the most part he's gentle and almost painfully sensitive. Shortly after he arrives in the middle of nowhere, USA, he takes a lie-down on a bench outside the store, which is definitely not a pawn shop, and is visibly upset by the prospect of selling his wedding ring for a measly \$20.

For all his apparent exhaustion, Thomas Jerome Newton moves with confidence and purpose. Once he gets to New York and finds patent attorney Oliver Farnsworth (Buck Henry), he sets his plan in motion, becoming incredibly wealthy and creating his own company: World Enterprises Corporation. His confidence unnerves his new partner, but even in their first meeting Newton shows a physical sensitivity, wincing and donning glasses. Intellectually he's a million miles ahead of us, but the bright lights and noise of our planet are brutal.

Newton quickly escapes back to New Mexico, where he meets hotel maid Mary-Lou (Candy Clark), who instantly takes a shine to him. The two become codependent, moving in together before building a house by a lake, and they drink themselves silly. As Newton becomes isolated, she gets increasingly desperate for some kind of connection with him, which he only occasionally seems inclined to indulge.

It's here that we see the tragedy of Newton. He's abandoned his wife and children back on his planet, and the comforts (gin, TV, church) that she provides him with are the catalyst of his growing mania. Some of the film's most memorable scenes are the ones they share, as he loses his mind in front of a bank of televisions that blare incoherent



Thomas Jerome Newton is a fragile stranger in our frantic world.

THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH

RETRO CLASSIC



"BOWIE HAS NEVER BEEN MORE BEAUTIFUL AS WHEN SHOT BY NICOLAS ROEG"

David Bowie's unique physicality is perfectly suited for the role.



CLASSIC QUOTES

"WE'D HAVE PROBABLY DONE THE SAME TO YOU, IF YOU'D COME 'ROUND OUR PLACE"

THOMAS JEROME NEWTON

"YOU KNOW TOMMY, YOU'RE A FREAK. I DON'T MEAN THAT UNKINDLY. I LIKE FREAKS. AND THAT'S WHY I LIKE YOU"

MARY-LOU

"I THINK PERHAPS MR NEWTON HAS HAD ENOUGH, DON'T YOU?"

WAITER

"WELL, I'M NOT A SCIENTIST. BUT I KNOW ALL THINGS BEGIN AND END IN ETERNITY"

THOMAS JEROME NEWTON

"THE STRANGE THING ABOUT TELEVISION IS THAT IT DOESN'T TELL YOU EVERYTHING. IT SHOWS YOU EVERYTHING ABOUT LIFE FOR NOTHING, BUT THE TRUE MYSTERIES REMAIN. PERHAPS IT'S IN THE NATURE OF TELEVISION. JUST WAVES IN SPACE"

THOMAS JEROME NEWTON

"MARY-LOU! HELP ME!"

THOMAS JEROME NEWTON

"IF I STAY HERE, I SHALL DIE"

THOMAS JEROME NEWTON

"MY LIFE ISN'T SECRET, MR FARNSWORTH, BUT IT IS PRIVATE"

THOMAS JEROME NEWTON

"THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN VISITORS"

THOMAS JEROME NEWTON

"YOU ASSUME THAT IT'S A WEAPON?"

THOMAS JEROME NEWTON

RETRO CLASSIC

THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH



Thomas learns cruelty and drunkenness from our world.



Mary-Lou is utterly besotted with Thomas, and desperate to connect.

➤ noise. There's a wonderful moment, as she begs him to turn off the screens, when Newton offers a cold grin and a small head shake, and it's really the first time we see a hint of cruelty. This is what they've done to each other.

In contrast, Newton's indirect, and subsequently direct, influence on Nathan Bryce (Rip Torn), a libidinous professor and scientist, gives the man a new sense of purpose and a sudden lack of interest in teenage girls. Newton's vulnerability in his moments with Bryce are similar to those with Mary-Lou, but almost more compassionate. He understands Bryce's concerns and is visibly touched by them. However, while they will become quite close, there is always a distance between the two, perhaps maintained by their mutual curiosity of each other.

In the end, both Mary-Lou and Nathan Bryce will be unable – or unwilling – to help Newton. His attempts to distance himself from her come just before his fall, as he (through Farnsworth) pays her off. Bryce becomes invaluable to his project of constructing a spacecraft, but it soon becomes apparent that they're both willing to look the other way when WEC's business rivals conduct an aggressive take-over, throwing Farnsworth and his partner through their apartment window and abducting Newton to conduct a series of experiments on him as decades pass. He's cheerily treated like a lab rat as they poke around in his anatomy,

searing his human contact lenses onto his eyes while keeping him topped up on gin. As a kind of repayment they give him all his old comforts like TV, alcohol and even the addled Mary-Lou, grown old and heavy but still desperately in need of him. Eventually, he's used up.

It's interesting to learn that Bowie was incredibly nervous about the prospect of his first leading role, but everyone involved speaks highly of his professionalism. He always showed up on time, he knew his lines, he was willing to stay as late as required, and he was eager to please. His only two-day absence is attributed rather mysteriously to drinking 'bad milk'. It's not surprising, given the stage at which this came in his career, that Bowie was taking huge quantities of cocaine daily. If the drugs negatively hindered his performance in any way, it doesn't show on screen.

Given director Nicolas Roeg's reputation for being somewhat difficult to work with, there also seem to be few horror stories from the production. The most notorious issues arising from his methods instead come from *Performance*, which traumatised star James Fox (and made excellent use of Mick Jagger), and *Bad Timing*, which he would make after *The Man Who Fell To Earth*, putting Art Garfunkel through apparently unbearable working hours.

The Man Who Fell To Earth came towards the end of Roeg's incredible run, following *Performance*, *Walkabout*



Rip Torn stars as the oversexed scientist Nathan Bryce.



Nicolas Roeg's vision of an alien world is certainly distinctive.

BOWIE ON FILM

Five more essential Bowie performances

LABYRINTH



1 The Goblin King comes into Sarah's life and takes her baby brother away, but is he just a singing, dancing, codpiece creation of her own psyche?

THE HUNGER

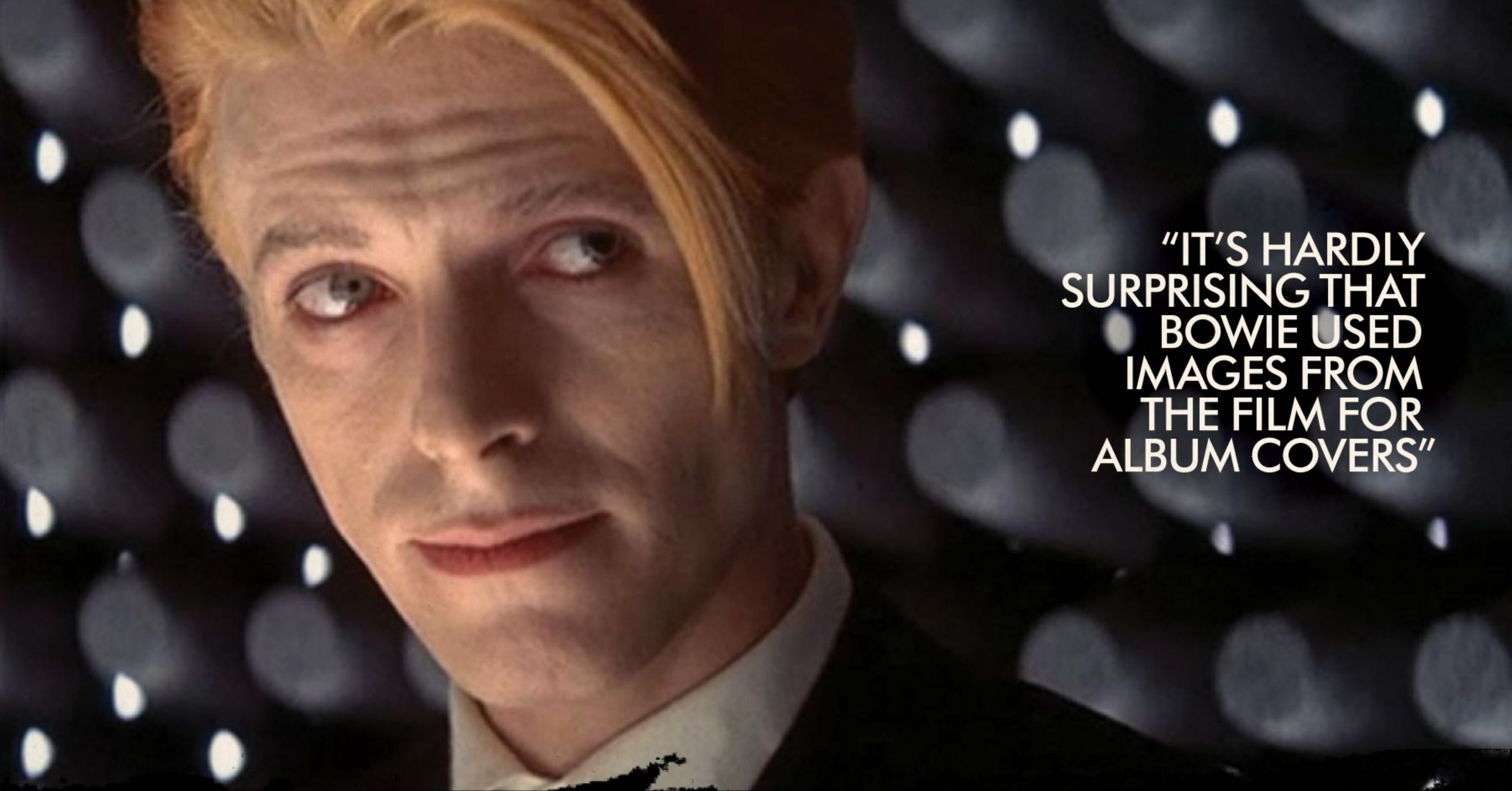


2 Luminous and tragic in Tony Scott's debut as the lover of Catherine Deneuve's vamp. He decays faster and faster while waiting for help.

TWIN PEAKS: FIRE WALK WITH ME



3 He's on screen for only a few minutes, but his appearance as the missing Agent Phillip Jeffries is unforgettable.



"IT'S HARDLY SURPRISING THAT BOWIE USED IMAGES FROM THE FILM FOR ALBUM COVERS"

and *Don't Look Now*, and it would be inaccurate to describe it as an easy film to get into. It meanders through its 139-minute running time with a very basic plot at its core. However, although it's tempting to throw the phrase 'self-indulgent' around, *The Man Who Fell To Earth* shows just how incredible Roeg's gifts are. The use of overlapping sound and images, his eye for visuals... it's hardly surprising that Bowie used images from the film for album covers.

But it's the murder of Buck Henry's worried lawyer which arguably the most impressive. Roeg cuts between his fall, the same fate befalling his partner, and flashes of their memories as panicked breathing is laid heavily on the soundtrack. Before he hits the ground, there's a seamless cut to the killers' employer diving into a swimming pool and approaching his beautiful wife. It's a lovely yet profoundly moving sequence.

Appropriately, *The Man Who Fell To Earth* comes to a quiet and tragic end. An elderly Bryce finds Newton drunk in a bar and tells him that he didn't enjoy his music. "I didn't make it for you anyway," Newton dismisses, and explains it was for his wife. After telling his human acquaintance that, "We'd have probably



Thomas begins to lose his mind in the face of television.

done the same to you, if you'd come 'round our place," Newton knocks his glass over. "I think perhaps Mr Newton has had enough, don't you?" says the waiter. "I think perhaps you're right," answers Bryce. But there's no closure. Newton will never age. He can't leave. His fascination with water (he comes from a drought-ridden planet) feels ever more relevant, as we ask ourselves what are we doing to this planet. At what stage will it have had enough?

WATCH FIRST



2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (1968)

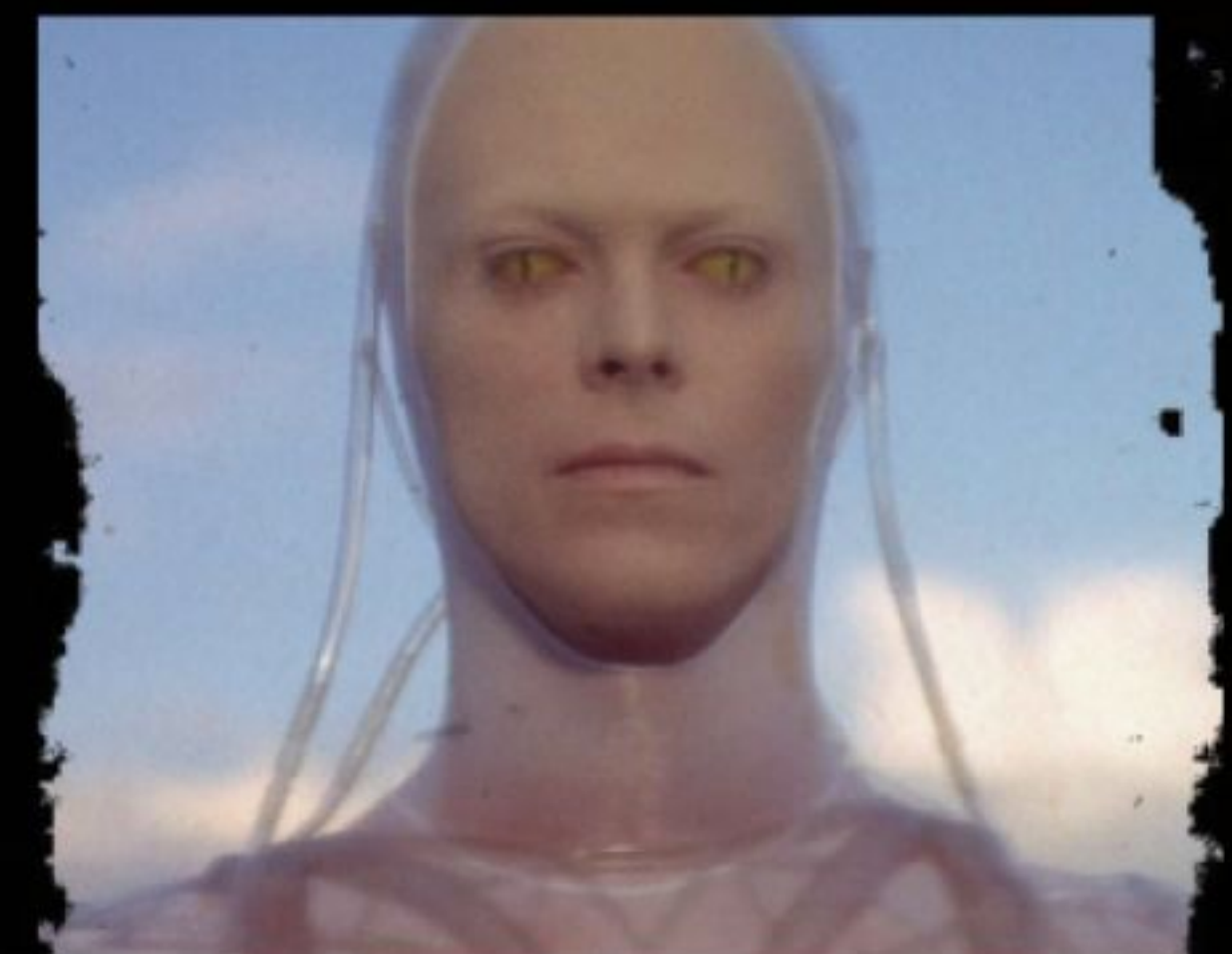
Kubrick's sci-fi masterpiece clearly influenced on Roeg's film, notably in its slipping between dreams and reality.

WATCH NEXT



UNDER THE SKIN (2014)

Scarlett Johansson is a visitor with a sinister agenda who begins to be corrupted by humanity.



YOUR TAKE ON THE CLASSIC

WHAT YOU THOUGHT @SCIFINOW



"It now suggests a much stronger, emotional feeling with Bowie gone. A very existential, sad SF film."
@ParsonsFiction



"Saw it on big screen few yrs ago, pretentious, but in a good way. Commendable for attempting getting ideas across in an arty way"
@AlfieGallagher



"Saw it a long time ago in college. Remember liking it, if more than a little freaked out by it."
@Harlegator68



"Watching *The Man Who Fell To Earth* was Bowie-licious"
@GapStargate



"I'd like to watch it again but i suspect my memory of it is better than the actuality?"
@sozki

THE PRESTIGE



4 His casting as Nikola Tesla is inspired, but he plays the genius completely straight. He's a reclusive man who is aware of the power of his creations.

MERRY CHRISTMAS, MR LAWRENCE



5 Not genre, but if you want proof of his talents as an actor, his performance as a British prisoner of war is more than enough.

FLASHBACK

INDEPENDENCE DAY 20TH ANNIVERSARY

MAKING AN ALMIGHTY IMPACT UPON ITS RELEASE 20 YEARS AGO, ROLAND EMMERICH'S INDEPENDENCE DAY HELPED TO REINVIGORATE THE HOLLYWOOD EVENT MOVIE. WITH THE IMMINENT RELEASE OF ITS SEQUEL, WE TAKE A RETROSPECTIVE LOOK BACK AT WHAT MADE THE ORIGINAL SO ENTERTAINING, AND SPEAK TO SCREENWRITER DEAN DEVLIN AND PRODUCTION DESIGNER PATRICK TATOPOULOS

WORDS OLIVER PFEIFFER



It may be difficult now to appreciate the colossal impact the teaser trailer for the original *Independence Day* movie had on audiences back in 1996. The appearance of an all-encompassing shadow engulfing iconic US landmarks, followed by the unbelievable sight of the White House suddenly being blown to smithereens, was quite simply jaw-dropping. To put things into perspective, this was a time before the horrific events of 9/11, before the spoilery consequences of the internet, and when cinemagoers held onto trailers alone to provide an intricate glimpse of what to expect from an eagerly anticipated blockbuster.

"Roland Emmerich didn't compromise. He went all the way. He went huge! You had this insane scale of annihilation which had never been attempted before," considers production designer Patrick Tatopoulos regarding the approach of the now renowned master-of-disaster director, who would go on to helm additional apocalyptic flicks like *The Day After Tomorrow* and *2012*. "We were trying to communicate how small we are in the universe, how much larger an alien craft coming toward us could be, and if an invasion happened that it could be that incredible."

Indeed, this was a world away from the 'we come in peace' style of cutesy aliens in – relatively small in comparison – spacecrafts and flying saucers seen in the likes of *ET* and *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind*. Instead, these were malevolent *War Of The Worlds*-style extraterrestrials with an aggressive sense of global entitlement. From the outset it was painfully clear that this wouldn't be a close encounter of the friendly kind.

"We started to talk about what the worldwide alien invasion would look like. What would happen if these things were unstoppable?" *Independence Day* scribe Dean Devlin tells us. "It was the destruction of these iconic [buildings] that made you feel, 'If they can blow up the White House, how do we ever stop them?'"

A close collaborative process was forged between Devlin and director Roland Emmerich – both of who had worked together on 1994's time travelling science fiction fantasy *Stargate* – to bring this mass visualisation to life. "As we started working on it, Roland came up with these images, these visual ideas," continues Devlin. "I would sit at one end of the table with a laptop working on a scene, and he sat at the other end with a sketchpad. He was literally drawing the scene that I had not yet written. When I'd finished writing a scene we would exchange, and I'd look at his drawings and he would look at my pages. Then we would change what we liked better."

Not that the scribe was initially sold on the idea of an alien-invasion flick in the first place. "When Roland first started talking to me about doing the movie, I actually didn't want to do it because I thought Spielberg had already done such a great job with aliens [in *Close Encounters*] – so how could we possibly top it?" he admits. "Roland kept talking about the images he wanted to do, which seemed really original. And I said, 'Well what if we don't deal with the aliens as evil bad guys, but more like a force of nature and did this like a disaster film?' and he said, 'That's exactly what I want to do!'"

The filmmakers were inspired by classic Seventies disaster movies, and embraced the concept with a

"ROLAND EMMERICH WENT ALL THE WAY. HE WENT HUGE!"
PATRICK TATOPOULOS



The cast included the likes of Will Smith (left) and Brent Spiner.

knowing sense of irony. This included enlisting a rich and recognisable ensemble cast – including some of today's superstars – portraying a colourful array of characters who come together in the face of disaster.

"It was very much like a Seventies Irwin Allen movie; the photography, the style, the staging of the actors – we really studied movies like *The Towering Inferno*, *The Poseidon Adventure* and *Earthquake*. It was definitely a conscious effort to mimic those kinds of films," reveals Devlin. "I think the success of *Independence Day* is attributed to how much the audience fell in love with these characters. Whether it's Will Smith going AWOL to find his [future] wife, Randy Quaid sacrificing his life for his children or the father-son relationship with Jeff Goldblum, the characters have so much love for each other, and I think that's what made it infectious and relatable."

Looking back at the film now, it's difficult not to be overwhelmed by its rather overtly American patriotic can-do message. However, Devlin points out that it evolves into a much broader spectrum of humanity. "It was meant to take a patriotic experience, which then becomes an international patriotism," he explains. "To start with, there's this idea that *Independence Day* is so related with an American

holiday, but now it's all humanity related against a common enemy. So we wanted that sense of patriotism to go beyond borders and [be] patriotism for humanity."

As one of two production designers working on *Independence Day* (the other being *Edge Of Tomorrow*'s Oliver Scholl), Patrick Tatopoulos reveals it was the simple but terrifying concept of the ship emerging from the clouds and blanketing the sky that helped put things into perspective. "Someone said, 'You wake up in the morning, step out the door of your house, and the sky has suddenly turned mechanical!' he reflects. "The idea that it's not just look up in the sky and there's a big aircraft – it's you look up in the sky and it's a mechanical engine now! That concept basically drafted the look of the film and how we were to approach it."

Tatopoulos was also tasked with designing the primal alien threat, a tricky concept when you consider the countless number of on-screen extraterrestrials that had come before. "The interesting thing is there were two different designs that I showed to Roland, and he said that he liked them both, so this very interesting concept came up to incorporate both ideas," reveals the production designer. "One of the ideas that I loved



"WE WERE TRYING TO BRING SOMETHING FRESH"

PATRICK TATOPOULOS

➤ was that this small alien inside the big one is actually the true alien – because, being a very fragile alien, it would be travelling inside a suit [which is] now an organic being. It's almost like a man covering himself in the skin of a bear. So the concept of the alien was those two designs combined."

Tatopoulos explains that it's the absence of eyes that can make a foreign creature intimidating. "Nothing is scarier to me than something that doesn't have eyes, because you don't see any emotion," he admits. "The finest example is the creature in the original *Alien* or the *Predator* [before he's unmasked] – you don't see their eyes. You don't know what these creatures feel. You don't know if they're scared. The main alien in *Independence Day* has very small gaps where the eyes would be, but you don't see them, which means you don't see emotion: that's scary!"

Equally crucial was the design of the alien spacecrafts – from the legion of small alien-piloted ships and the substantial attacker that can instantly obliterate cityscapes to the mammoth Earth-orbiting mothership. "We looked at films like *Close Encounters* and *Aliens*, but we were genuinely trying to



Ultimately, the plot of *Independence Day* functions like a game of chess.



INDEPENDENCE DAY

FLASHBACK



Jeff Goldblum proved a popular casting choice as computer genius David Levinson.



Bill Pullman as President Whitmore.



bring something fresh," he explains. "For many years I've been trying to work both hands of the spectrum: designing the set and also working on the creatures. The reason for that is because the world has to have the right fit for the creatures. When I designed the alien I also designed the small craft, the attacker, the destroyer and the mothership: all those things have to feel a part of the same civilisation. When we finished we looked at the alien head and the attacker, and we realised that the top of the alien head looks exactly like the aircraft – it was two designs without really thinking about it. That sort of thing comes instinctively."

Although *Independence Day* was seen as a turning point for CGI visual effects, resulting in those memorable Oscar-winning shots of mass destruction, an overlooked aspect was the practicality of the creatures, which combine carefully integrated man-in-a-suit aesthetics, mechanical effects and alien puppets. "CGI was not good enough then to shoot in close-up, so you would use puppets or make-up and then use CGI for the wide shot of the creature," says Tatopoulos. "Every time you see the alien from the torso up it's someone inside the suit. But when you see the whole alien and it starts walking it's actually a small-scale puppet that we shot on green screen."

In order to maintain that imperative design continuation, Tatopoulos was appointed as a visual consultant on the forthcoming 20-years-later sequel *Independence Day: Resurgence*. "I worked with them for about three months to bring that style and texture back," he says. "They have created such a back story and an aesthetic for the aliens that they wanted to keep that tradition."



For the first time, *Independence Day* truly captured the ground-floor hysteria of an alien invasion.

Devlin, who's a producer on *Resurgence* and wrote the initial draft with Emmerich, reveals he's happy with the way the sequel has evolved – both as a throwback to the original for fans and as a handing down of the torch to a new generation. "I'm really proud of this movie. For years I didn't want to do a sequel," he admits. "In fact, not long after 9/11, I'd written a sequel that we never handed in because I didn't feel it was worthy. I'm really pleased that we've finally been able to do one that is a worthy successor."

Despite some unbelievably far-fetched sequences (including that infamous moment Vivica A Fox and her just-in-the-nick-of-time canine companion manage to escape an erupting inferno by using the exit door), the original *Independence Day* remains a brazenly entertaining popcorn disaster flick, which knowingly embraces genre clichés for a pumped-to-the-max thrill ride. Just don't take it all too seriously. 🐾



Independence Day is available to buy on DVD and Blu-ray now.

"CHECKMATE"

5 REASONS ID4 REMAINS A GUILTY PLEASURE



1 Rich Ensemble Cast

While Will Smith, the delightfully offbeat Jeff Goldblum and a scene-chewing Bill Pullman as the president headline, they are also supported by a recognisable supporting cast. This includes Vivica A Fox, Judd Hirsch (as Goldblum's hilariously outspoken father), Randy Quaid, Mary McDonnell, James Duvall, James Rebhorn, singer Harry Connick Jr and the recently departed veteran character actor Robert Loggia. Also great value is an almost unrecognisable Brent Spiner – in a role a literal world away from Data in *Star Trek: The New Generation* – as the overly excitable and seemingly ill-fated scientist Dr Okun.



2 Chilling Depiction of Mass Destruction

20 years on, the sight of iconic US buildings being instantly obliterated still sends chills down the spine, not least because this was five years before the very real events of 9/11.



airborne assault) – the dogfight between jet fighters and a seemingly unlimited legion of alien attacker spacecrafts still packs an exhilarating punch.

3 Thrilling Action

Screenwriter Dean Devlin was also in charge of second unit and – although overtly *Star Wars* inspired (listen to the dialogue between the marines during the initial



for global domination are unequivocally communicated through an unconscious Dr Okun.

4 Cold-Ass Aliens

We'll learn more about their origins in sequel *Resurgence*, but for now let's recall that deeply chilling scene where the aliens' deadly intentions



5 Humour

Whether it's Judd Hirsch's hilariously verbose Jewish father or Will Smith's "That's what I call a close encounter!" moment, *ID4* contains some classic comical moments. It would be a shame to see *Resurgence* lose this all-important element. Though with Devlin's involvement, we think it's in safe hands!

"DOOMWATCH
WAS IN A CLASS
OF ITS OWN"
JEAN TREND



Trend became friends off-screen with Blanshard and Simon Oates.



She fondly recalls working with series stalwarts John Paul and Joby Blanshard.



INTERVIEW

JEAN TREND

ONE OF THE MOST UNDERRATED BRITISH TV SERIES OF ALL TIME, THERE'S NOTHING QUITE LIKE DOOMWATCH. WE SPOKE TO ACTRESS JEAN TREND – AKA DR FAY CHANTRY – ABOUT HER ROLE AND ITS ENDURING LEGACY...

WORDS STEVE WRIGHT

In a time where the world lived in the shadow of the Cold War, no show best articulated the unspoken fear of the future quite like the Terence Dudley-produced *Doomwatch*, which saw a team led by Dr Spencer Quist (John Paul) tackle a variety of scientific mysteries.

Having caused controversy by killing of the fan-favourite Toby Wren in the Series One finale, into the breach stepped a couple of new characters, including Dr Fay Chantry, played by Jean Trend, who was kind enough to look back with us about the show and what it means to have been a part of it.

How did you become a part of *Doomwatch*?

I wrote to Terry [Dudley], as you did in those days, and said, "Is there anything coming up?" I had worked with him, and almost immediately he offered me the role of Dr Fay Chantry, which of course I knew about because it had caused such a furore in the first series, so here I was in the second series! I don't think I realised I was going to be a part of the team, not until I started to get the scripts, and then go in for rehearsals and read-throughs. It just wouldn't happen these days – nowadays you'd have to do at least six auditions. None of the writers or directors knew me, they just took it on Terry!

How much input did you have into Fay, both in terms of her character and past?

I don't think I had any – as time went on, I realised that I was the one with all the scientific and biology knowledge. Rewatching it, I was quite staggered – "Wow – you sound as though you know what you're doing!" She was on top of her job, she knew what she was about, she was a very secure of course until 'The Human Time Bomb', which was when she's shown as being vulnerable in the high-rise flats and being targeted by the obscene phone calls and everything.

What was it like to join a cast that had already been working together for a while?

Because Robert Powell [who played Toby Wren] had left, there was two of us who joined, John Nolan and me, and I knew Simon [Oates, John Ridge] for many years, because we originally belonged to a group called the 24, a group of actors and writers. We did play readings,

had meetings, passed on knowledge to each other, so it was nice, because he was very welcoming. All of them: Joby Blanshard and his wife Isabelle, they became my second son's godparents, so we remained very good friends afterwards.

You replaced Toby Wren, the show's most popular character. How was that for you?

Fortunately for me, because I was a biologist, so a completely new person, I never felt I was replacing him. Maybe a male would, maybe John Nolan felt he was replacing Robert Powell, but because it was the two of us being new, we felt this was a completely new series; [it] had moved on. Except of course that first episode of the series, 'You Killed Toby Wren', all the to's and fro's of who was to blame, Quist feeling guilty and all that.

Up until that point the show had been quite male-dominated. Do you think Fay changed the show in that regard?

Yes, I hope so. Quite a few females came in – my friend Shirley Dixon [who also starred in *Doomwatch*], I saw her over the weekend and showed her her episode, 'You Killed Toby Wren', and she was a strong, very strong character indeed, so yes, I think we did our bit!

I remember being quite cross – somebody said, "Well, who's going to look after your child?" I thought, "Well, that's a bit cheeky, that's none of your business!" [laughs] I must have been a feminist even then!

***Doomwatch* is renowned for its very long scenes – how were they to film?**

It's amazing again, watching them back you realise how long the scenes were! They give so much information, you really can't let go; you have to concentrate like mad to get all the information that's being given. And they are such long scenes, I mean what is it nowadays, 30 seconds and then we cut to another? But then of course it wasn't unusual for us – all scenes were long ones.

You also starred in the 1972 feature film – how was that to film compared to the TV series?

It was at Pinewood – so not the intimacy of White City and the BBC studios. There was a vast, vast studio with our laboratory in it. An awful lot of it was location

work, which Fay wasn't involved with – I was in the studios, always in the labs. As everyone said, why call it *Doomwatch* when really the *Doomwatch* team were hardly there? It was all Ian Bannen and Judy Geeson going out and doing really what Ridge and Quist should have been doing, and Hardcastle – not necessarily Fay, because she didn't go out on location that much.

***Doomwatch* remains socially relevant today. Did you have any idea at the time?**

Not that it would be that enduring – Kit [Pedler, the co-creator] was just a genius. His thinking ahead and his worries, which proved to be true – lead in mackerel, it was extraordinary how he saw these disasters ahead. I'm pleased that it's still going out, especially as so much at the BBC got wiped, an awful lot of my stuff in the Sixties and Seventies doesn't exist – wiped out!

You weren't involved in Series Three – much of which is also unavailable to view today...

I was informed that they were going ahead with Series Three, but unfortunately without Dr Chantry, so that was a shock. John didn't go back either, although he went on to go to Hollywood and have quite a good career!

Does the experience of making *Doomwatch* stand out compared to your other work?

Yes, because this was in a class of its own. The nearest thing to being proud of, very closely second, is *The Flipside Of Dominick Hide*. The cleverness and detail of that, with Peter Firth as Dominick Hide. It's set in the Eighties in 150 years time, and it's just so charming. It was such a negative time in the Eighties, but it was saying that it is a future and the world is still revolving.

Looking back, how proud are you of your part in *Doomwatch's* legacy?

In a way, because it's in the past, and because it is of that era, for me I'm pleased and proud that I did it, very proud, and I do think I was very lucky to have been given it, I really do!



Doomwatch is available to buy on DVD now, distributed by Simply Media.



THE SCIFINOW CAPRICA QUIZ

ARE YOU MORE CAPRI-CAN OR CAPRI-CAN'T? CAN YOU LAST MORE THAN ONE SEASON? FIND OUT WITH OUR QUIZ!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Who is the headmistress of the Athena Academy?
2. Where are Joseph and Sam Adama from?
3. What name does Zoe Graystone's virtual copy go by?
4. Who is the series' first main antagonist?
5. What is the name of Sam Adama's husband?

TECHNICALITIES

6. Who coins the term 'Cylon' at the end of the show's pilot episode?
7. What is 'Cylon' short for?

8. Who becomes the new Mother of the Church at the end of the series?
9. What is the title given to the leader of the Ha'la'tha crime syndicate on Caprica?
10. What is Amanda Graystone's occupation?

THE STO MUST GO ON

11. What is the full name of the monotheist terrorist group sometimes known as STO?
12. Where is the STO based?
13. Who is the clandestine leader of the STO on Caprica?

14. What kind of symbol represents the STO?
15. What is the name of the student responsible for the MagLev bombing?

BEYOND THE SCREEN

16. *Caprica* takes place how many years before the destruction of the 12 colonies of Kobol?
17. How many episodes did the show run for?
18. What is *Caprica*'s tagline?
19. Which well-known TV composer wrote *Caprica*'s soundtrack?
20. What is the title of the final episode of *Caprica*?

DIDN'T HE/SHE DO WELL! See how you did with our arbitrary scoring system

16-20

DANIEL GRAYSTONE
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11-15

JOSEPH ADAMA
Your family situation and social life is a mess, but when it comes to using your head you're always one step ahead. Keep your criminal tendencies in check and you'll be quizzing with the big guns.

6-10

ZOE GRAYSTONE
You are strong-willed and passionate, but you need to tone down the attitude. Try teaming up with your virtual copies to form a quiz team. After all, the only person you can truly trust is yourself.

0-5

LACY RAND
One of both your main problems is that you never follow through on anything. You say you're going to do something and then back out. That's the most undesirable quality a quiz mate can have.

ANSWERS: 1. CLARICE WILLOW 2. TAURON 3. ZOE 4. BARNABAS GREELEY 5. LARRY 6. DANIEL GRAYSTONE 7. CYBERNETIC LIFEFORM NODE 8. LACY RAND 9. GUATRAU 10. SURGEON 11. SOLDIERS OF THE ONE 12. GEMENON 13. SISTER CLARICE WILLOW 14. THE INFINITE SYMBOL 15. BEN STARK 16. 58 17. 19 18. "THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY BEGINS WITH A CHOICE." 19. BEAR MCCREARY 20. APOTHEOSIS

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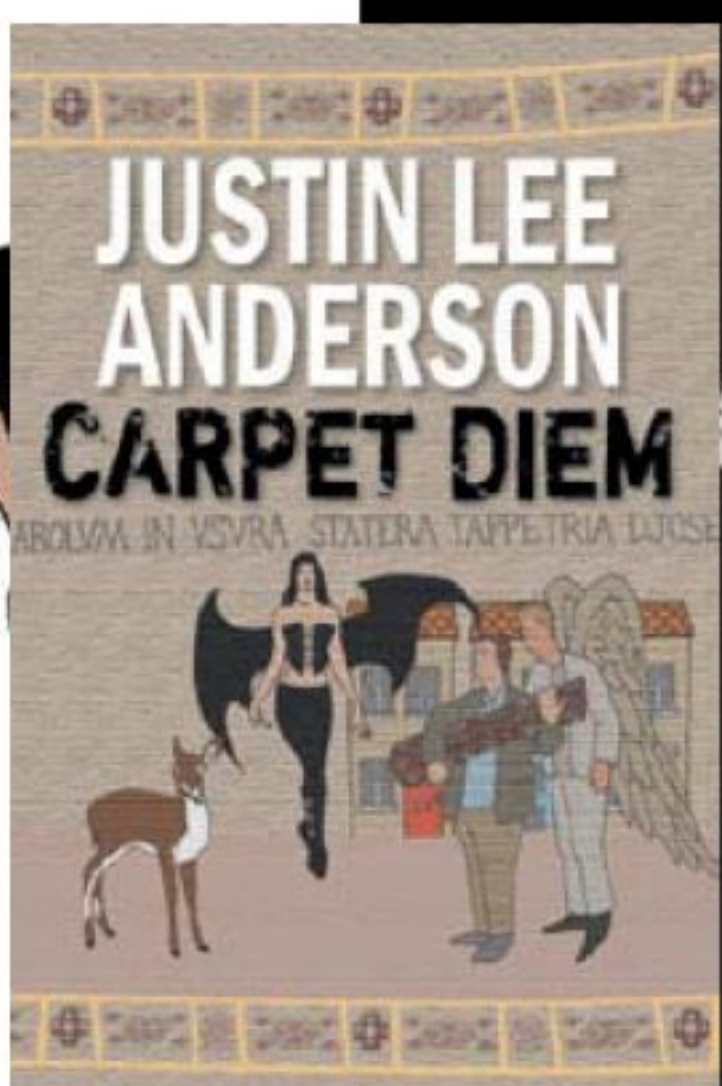
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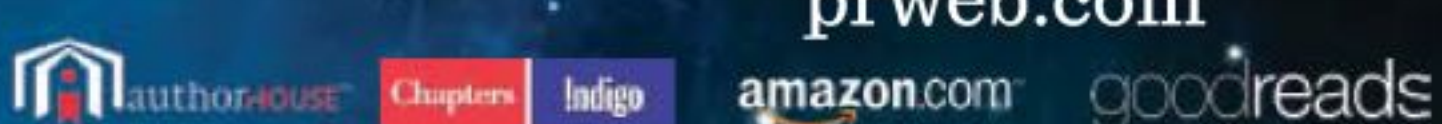
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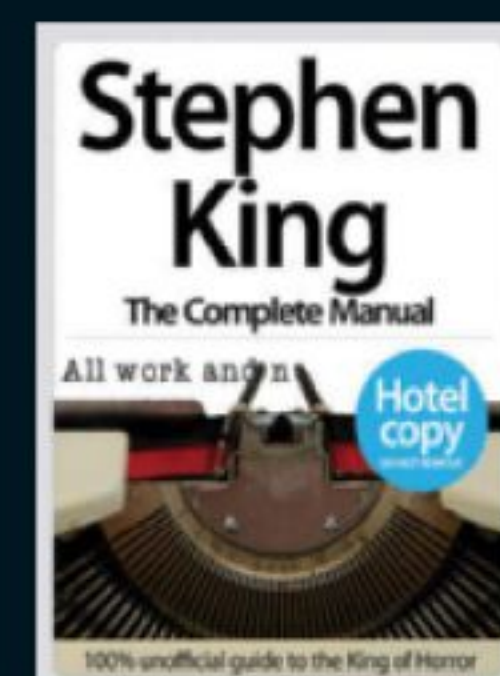
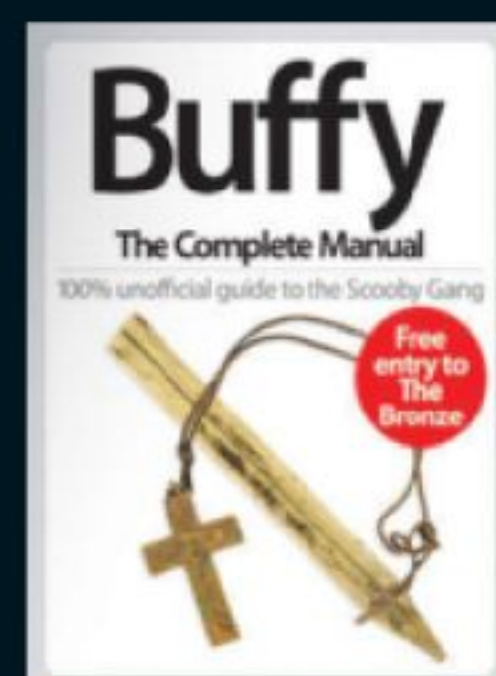
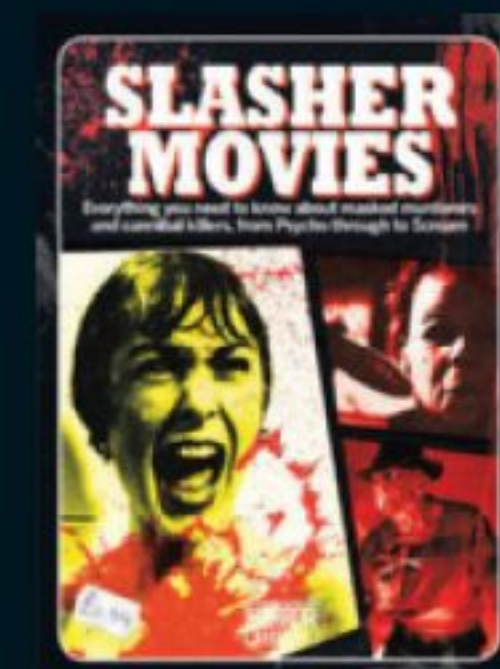
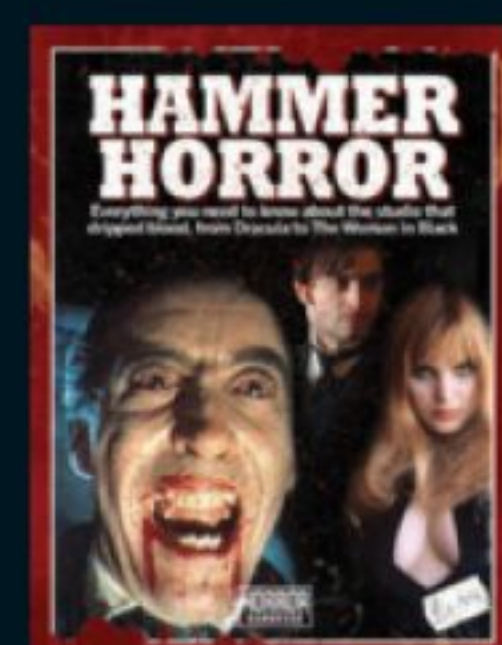
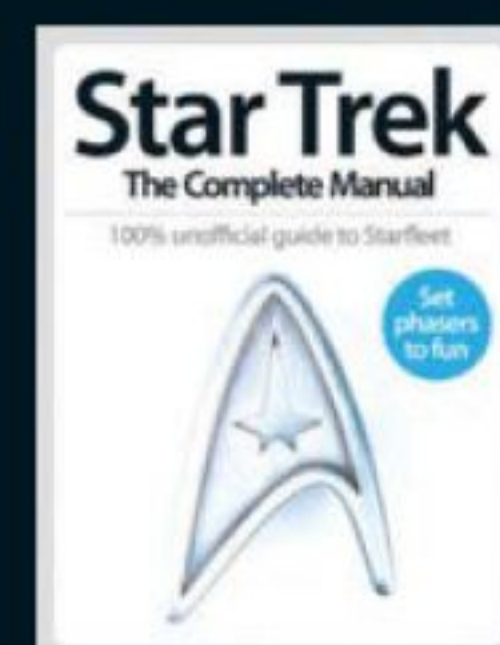
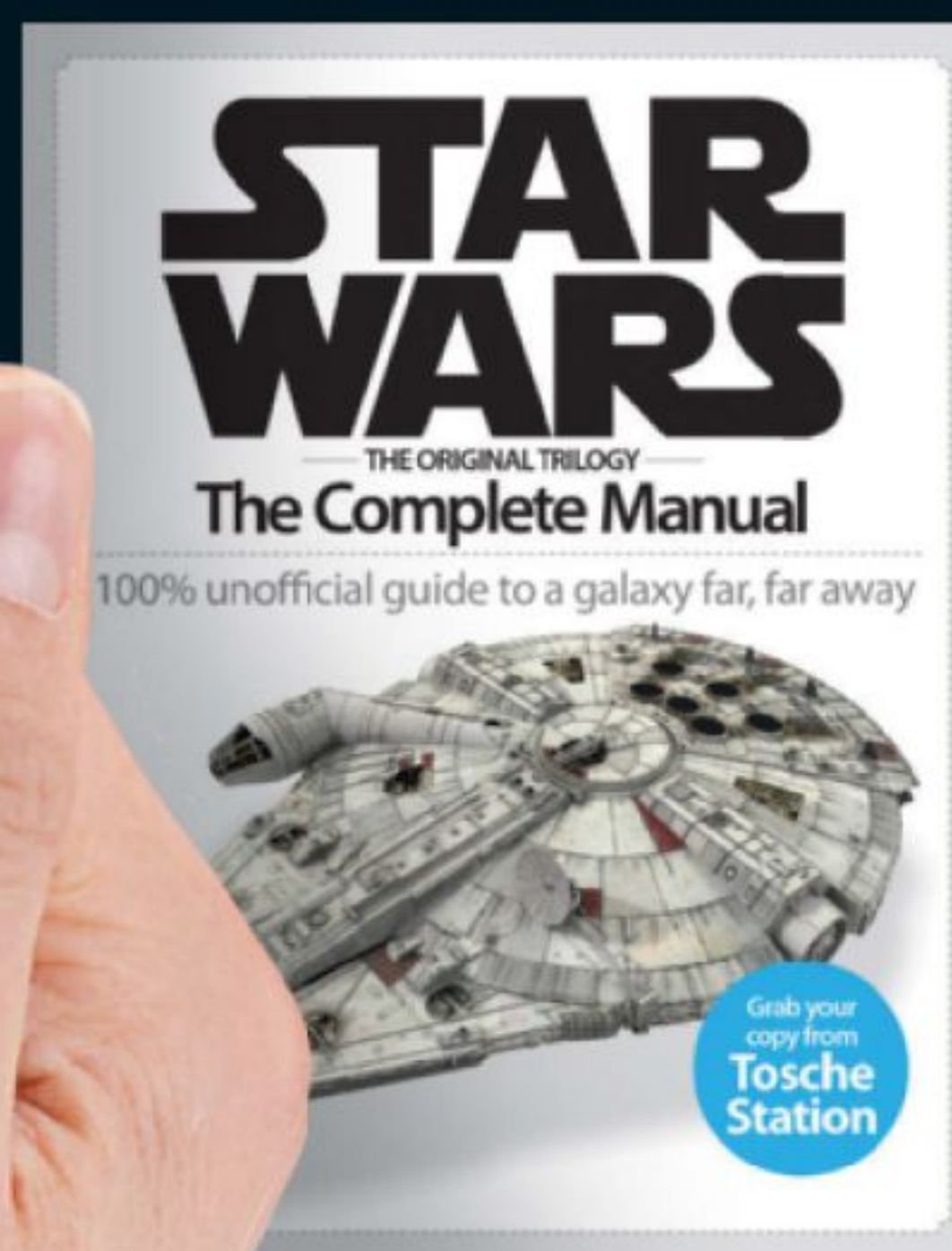
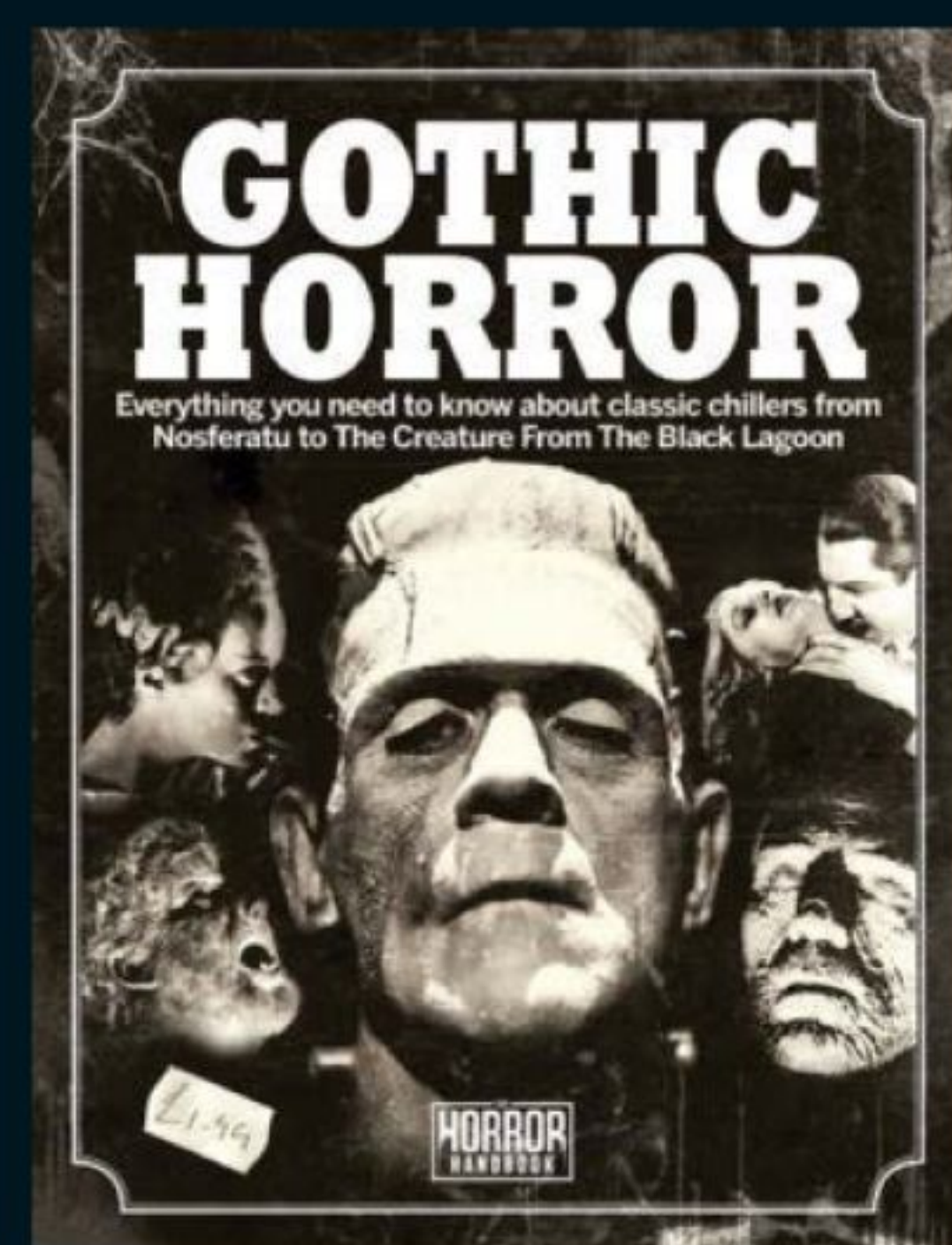


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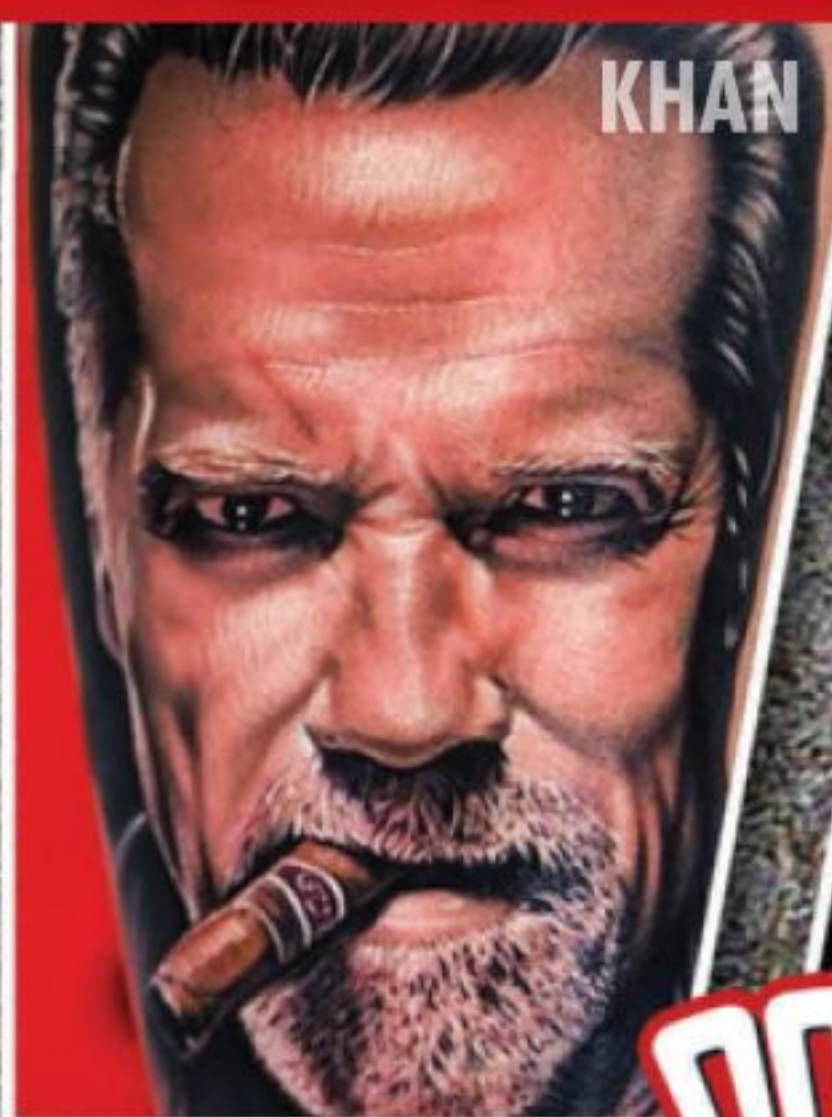


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